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Mobile B

THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 161 JANUARY 2015

TECH TUNE-UP



- Avoiding Gear Failures
- Secrets to Good Audio
- Gear Buying Strategies

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DJ Jazzy Jeff



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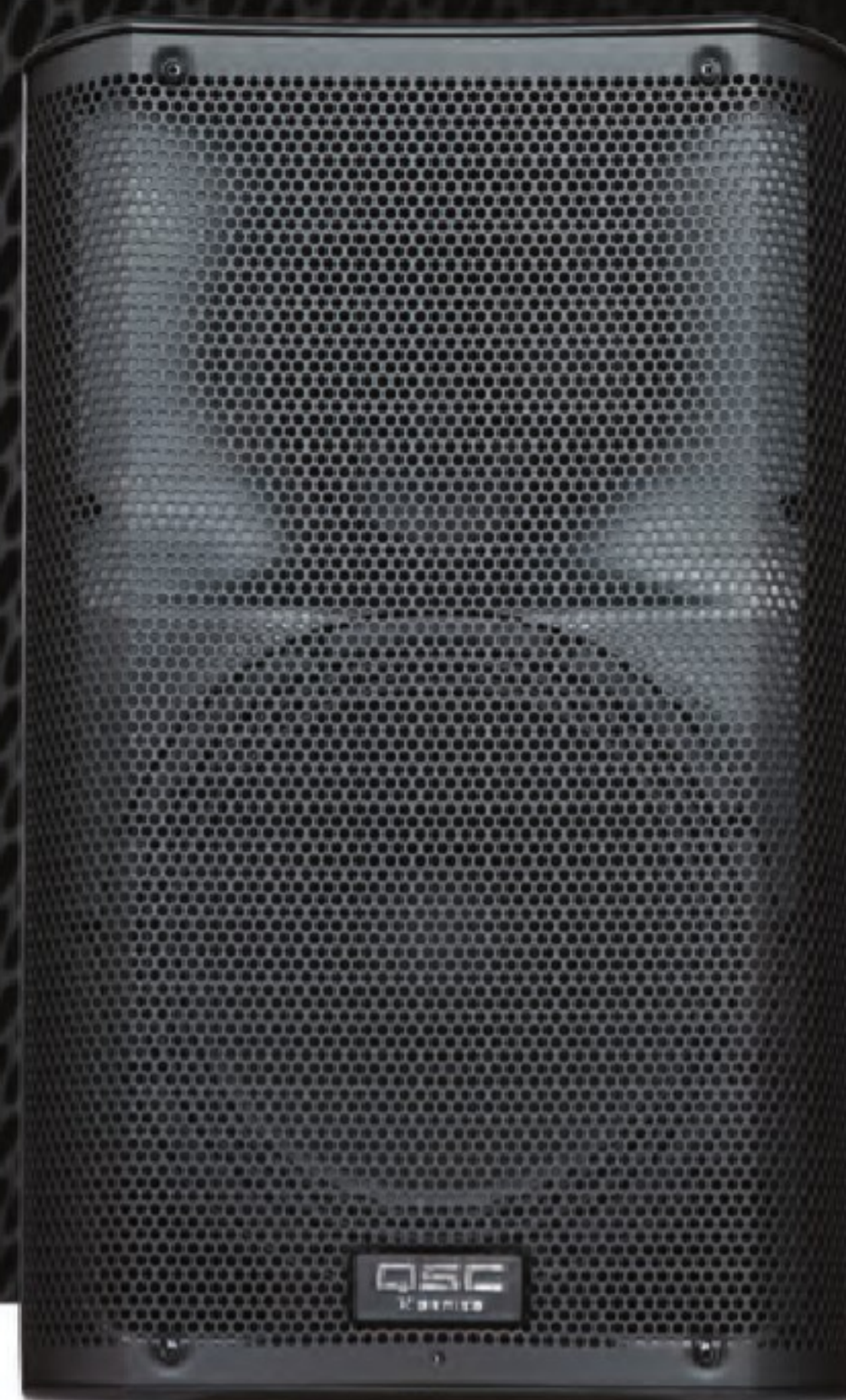
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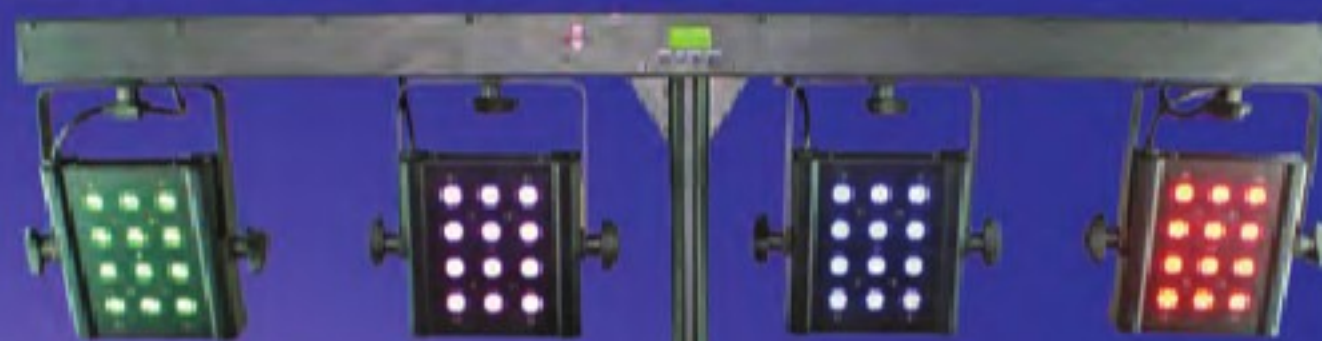
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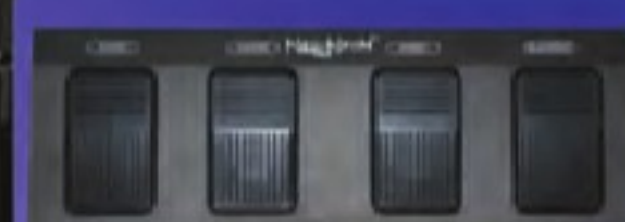
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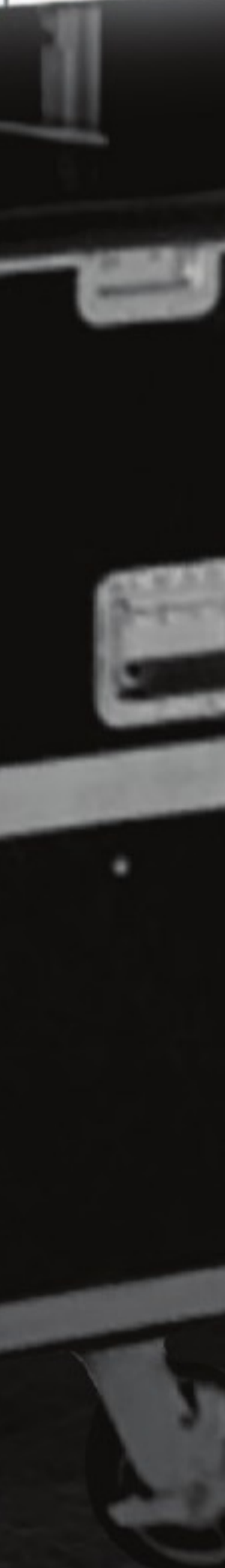


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TECH TUNE-UP



Forza Mobile Video Wall
By Volanti Displays
(artistic rendering)

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TRACK ONE

So here we are at the beginning of another year—what better time than now to take a look at the technical side of the mobile DJ adventure?

In this issue, we look at DJ equipment, and our relationship with it, from a bunch of different angles. We are especially happy to welcome back to these pages co-founder and former publisher of Mobile Beat, Bob Lindquist, with a heavy-duty feature covering some great ways to make sure your gear doesn't turn on you when you least expect it. After a slew of equipment reviews over the last year, Bob once again unleashes a full-on, gear-knowledge onslaught in this article.

Also on board are Stu Chisholm on the ins and outs of creating truly good audio; Staci Nichols with a reality check on how the tools and toys relate to the primary client for most MB readers—the bride; Joe Bunn with some good ideas for avoiding those unnecessary gear purchases; and an extended version of our recurring DJ Toolbox column, featuring readers' very own tech and other solutions for their businesses.

Other great content inside includes an interview with the dean of DJ marketers, Tom Quiner of Breakthrough Marketing; four ways to generate replies from brides from Stephanie Padovani; and a provocative piece on what school clients really want to know, by Arnoldo Offermann. Enjoy!

— Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

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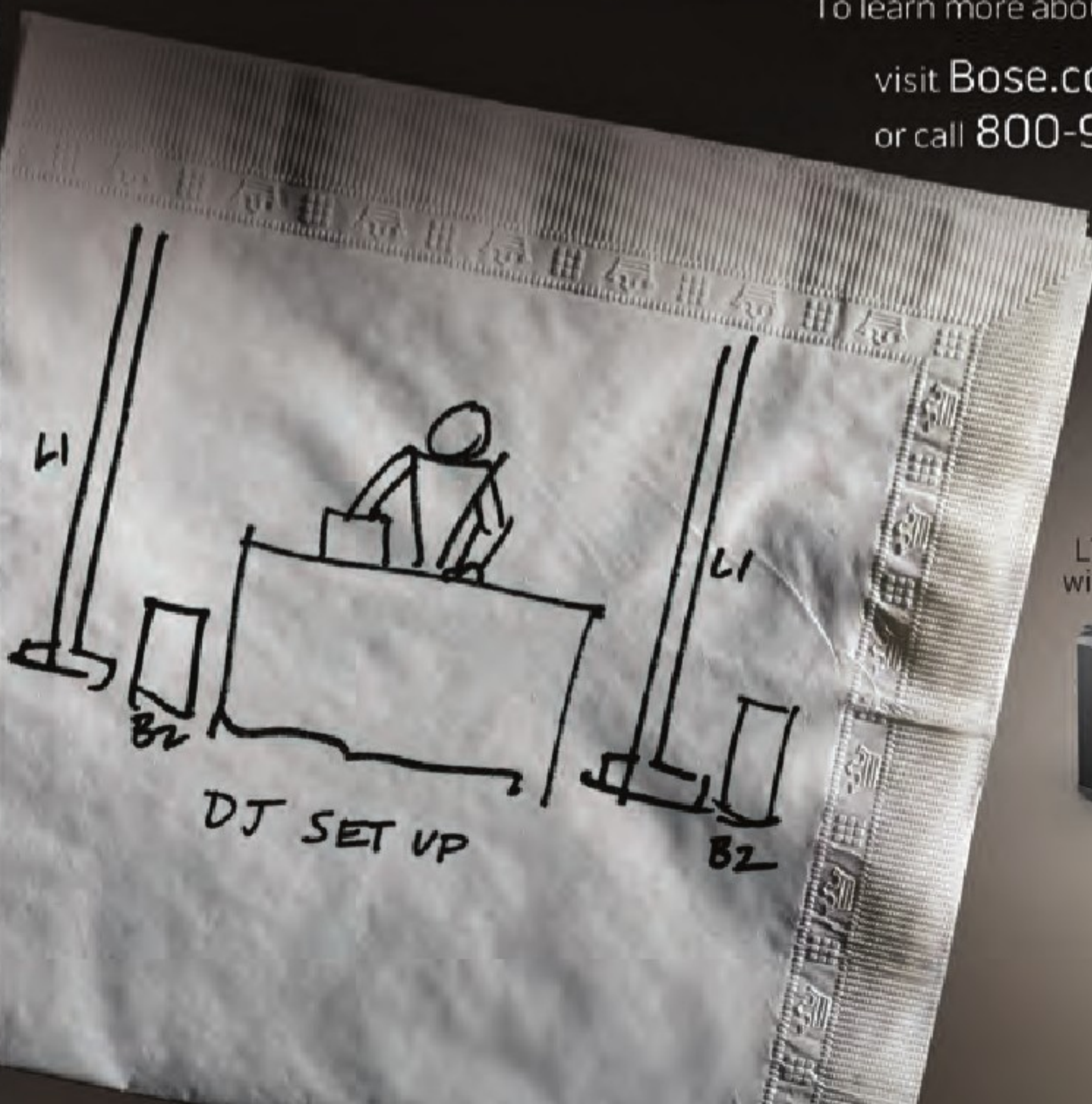
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The Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas tried three times to place an entry into the ever competitive world of multi-million dollar nightclubs but three times came up empty. After a 2011 Memorial Day Weekend opening as Club Nikki, the hotel opened this 15,000 square foot room with all the style and service of a European club, coupled with the wild abandon and good time vibe Las Vegas is so well known for.

By September that same year the club had closed, with shorter stints to follow re-opening under the names RPM and later Bagatelle Nightclub.

Tropicana's Loss is MBLV's Gain

By July of 2013, the hotel had retained exclusive control of the property and turned



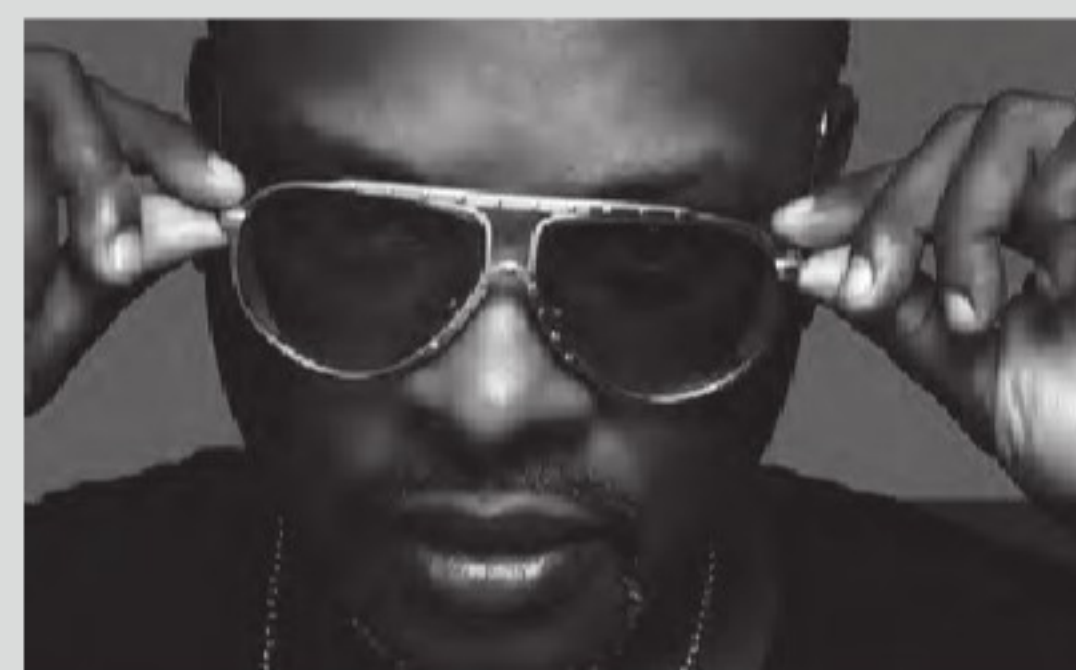
it into its present status, Havana Room & Beach Club, a private event space concept.

On Tuesday February 24, the Havana Room will play host to "Legends Night at MBLV" featuring DJ Jazzy Jeff and Six-Mix-A-Lot, starting at 9PM. "It's unfortunate the space failed to be successful as a night club, but now, this has got to be the coolest private room for parties in Las Vegas," says MBLV producer Mike Buonaccorso, who recently toured the site. "It will be like having our own private night club!"

Don't Miss MBLV's Great Entertainment...

Legends Night at Mobile Beat Las Vegas • Tuesday February 24

With Sir Mix-A-Lot, DJ Jazzy Jeff and other DJs



Club Night at Surrender at Encore • Wednesday, February 25

A major hit at the 2014 show, so we brought it back for MBLV19. On Wednesday, February 25th Surrender at Encore will open its doors at 10:30 PM and will provide free admission until midnight for MBLV attendees.



...and These Other Attractions

DigiGames Game Power • Monday, February 23, 8:00 PM

Before hitting The Strip, get a quick shot of Game Power at DigiGames' fast-paced variety show, filled with interactive games anyone can do and TV-style game shows (with Rob Johnson hosting). Win prizes, connect with friends, and get pumped for the all-new MBLV!

DJ Takeover • Monday, February 23, 9:00 PM

Run by DJs (not by Mobile Beat), this attendee-driven event is a popular destination on Monday night of the show.

Go to www.mobilebeatlasvegas.com for more details, and to register for MBLV.



Feb 23-26, 2015

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EXHIBITORS

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Promo Only



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Sound Choice



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DJ Event Planner



Photo Box Interactive



EZ Photo Booths



V-Moda



ProDJ Lighting



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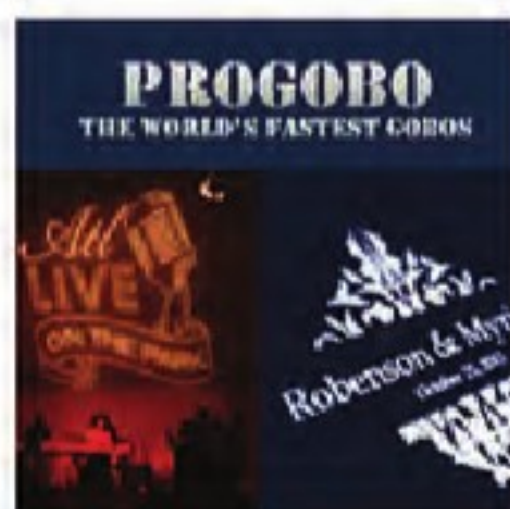
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More Powerful Presenters

For more on MBLV's other great speakers, Penn Jillette, Gary Shapiro, Mark Ferrell, Rob Schenk and Joe Bunn, go to mobilebeatlasvegas.com or check out the December 2014 issue of MB. Here's the rest of the top-notch line-up:

Ben Stowe • 5 Things Your Mother Never Told You About Being a DJ

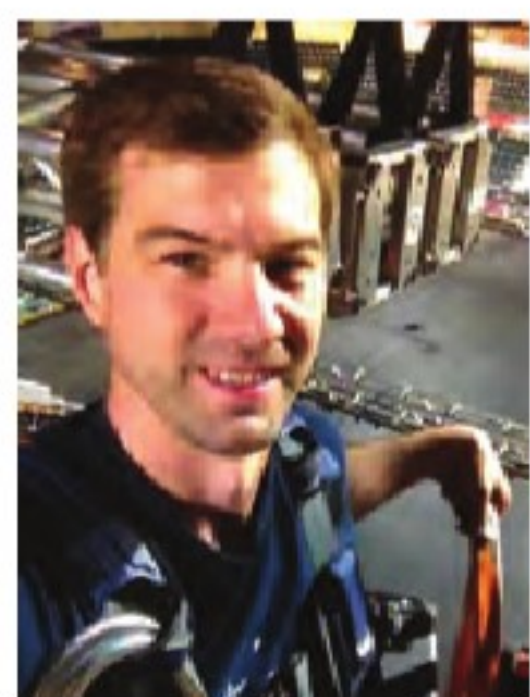
The Presentation

Most DJs become DJs because they want to entertain, or rock the house, or make money (of course)—but seldom do they actually want to do more math or have any understanding of physics. Thus they fall victim to what they don't know repeatedly. Learn more about the processes and technologies behind your gear. Better results garner safer shows, and higher paying clients!

Ben's highly informational, slightly nerdy and always funny presentation style has made him a crowd favorite. But this time, see the "Guru of Geek" as you've never seen him before!

The Presenter

Ben's love for electronics began when as a very young through the inspiration of a neighbor he often visited. The neighbor ran the small town's TV repair shop out of his home, and in order to occupy the energetic Ben, allowed him to play with the brightly colored electronic components.



This led to years of schooling in electricity, electronics, robotics and lasers.

Fast-forward to today, and Ben has built NLFX Professional, a premier gear supplier, and his AV installs have been

featured in almost every major industry trade magazine. He holds a number of certifications and accreditations, including the most widely recognized one in the AV industry, the InfoComm CTS.

His love for education inspired him to begin the *ProAcademy* educational sessions (now being produced as DVDs), focused on increasing understanding of AV technologies within the industry. He is also a regular contributing author to industry magazines in the United States and Europe.

Josh Yawn • The Ultimate Host

The Presentation

Ever consider rebranding yourself to be known primarily as a host, and not a DJ or emcee? Would it enhance your stature with your clients? That's what Josh Yawn did. Learn the value of hosting correctly, and how to wrap that into your marketing. You may just realize there's an incredibly overlooked value there, and it doesn't have to play second fiddle to DJing. Just as every DJ in your market claims to be the best DJ, so does every DJ claim to be an "emcee." Find the way to separate yourself from that just as you do as a DJ, and reap the benefits!

Well-respected in the mobile disc jockey industry for his host training, Josh will be presenting an all-new, extremely interactive version of his "Hosting for DJs" seminar at Mobile Beat Las Vegas.

The Presenter

Josh Yawn is the author of the best-selling *Hosting for DJs* and executive producer of the popular *DJ Crash Course* DVD series.

He has made a successful career as a television host, producer, music composer and voiceover artist. Josh was a host on Game Show Network's live show *GSN Live*, producer of the



25th anniversary reunion of Nickelodeon's *You Can't Do That on Television*, and was behind the scenes of many other hit television shows including Nickelodeon's *My*

Family's Got Guts, NBC's *Biggest Loser* and *Last Comic Standing*, and ABC's *Supernanny*.

Currently, Yawn is host and executive producer of the game show *Family Knows Best* and is CEO of the television production house and advertising agency Joshua Productions with products running in markets nationwide.

Carr Hagerman • Top Performer: Plan Less—Succeed More!

The Presentation

Carr eschews the traditional approach in favor of a surprising new way of presenting. Tired of powerpoint? Watch how Carr frames this provocative and challenging message:

What can you eliminate and diminish that would create a greater connection with others? What do you plan to leave behind that will make a difference in the quality of life for others and yourself? What is your personal "code" for success?

Be inspired to embrace your unique approach in the world and identify all the things that get in the way of connection and leadership.

The Presenter

Rather than follow the path of the MBA into the corporate world, Carr Hagerman took his talent to the streets—literally. Over 30 years ago he began his career as a professional street performer when he created a gritty, smart, irreverent, and irresistible



"walk about" street character at a renaissance festival in Minnesota.

His comedic improv shows drew big crowds and plenty of local press, and gave him serious practical knowledge on the power of creative

engagement. He eventually integrated his knowledge of the streets with performing, and packaged it for the world of business.

He's worked with Hilton Hotels, Best Buy, Royal Bank Of Scotland, Apple, American Express, Wells Fargo, United States Post Office, Microsoft, The US Marines, Coke, GM, Proctor and Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, Starbucks and many more. His humorous, honest and provocative presentations are consistently among the most popular at any conference in which he speaks.

His best selling book "Top Performer: A Bold Approach To Sales And Service" has been translated into 10 different languages.

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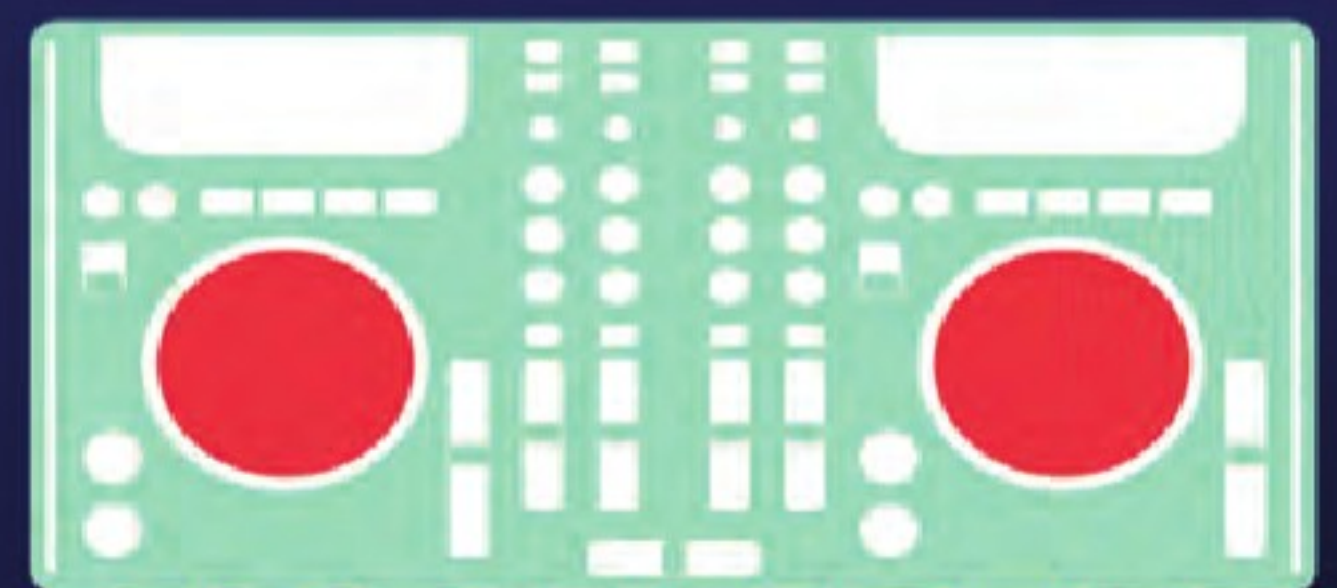
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Love What You Do

By Bryan Dodge

Do what you love in the service of people who love what they do. There are four “keys” and one major “door.”

1. Do what you love and make sure that your heart is in your work. Bring yourself fully and gratefully into everything you do. Be connected to your own work in order to inspire others. I truly believe that the vast majority of people grossly underestimate the power of the heart. They have no idea (or have forgotten) how



much energy can be unleashed in themselves and those around them by telling others why they love their position and the influence they have on the company. Communicating their authentic hopes and aspirations for the future of their company will help bring back the liveliness that may have faded with time. We don't always remain in love with what we do, as if it is in the beginning. But unless you love what you do, you are not making that true difference you are here to make. Accept that

as truth and associate with people who will help you fall back in love again...with your job, your life, with all the opportunities that are around you. Don't do what the average person does, fall out of love with what they do, yet hang on as long as they can until they lose what they used to love, and only then appreciate what they had. Successful people have learned how to find ways to fall back in love with what they do before it's too late; they find the energy to encourage growth in the environment for which they are responsible..

2. Understanding the power of serving people will keep you true, honest, and ethical. If you're doing what you love, you'll make yourself happy. But leadership is not only about you; it's about your impact on others. After years of raising Labrador Retrievers, I always remind the people that buy the pups from me that money can buy the dog, but love can make it wag its tail. I believe that in most cases, it is a simple case of mistaken cause and effect. A mission statement in a company doesn't generate the energy that produces the chemistry in the team; love does, great ideas do, principles and values do, and most importantly, learning how to show up for people consistently so they are reminded why they truly love where they are does. During one of my programs in Colorado, a V.P. asked me, “How do you make sure you show up for each employee on a consistent basis?” I asked him how many people are on his team and he replied, “116.” So I told him to take the next 116 workdays and assign each day to one person. Each day would be the “show up day” for that person and during the day, he was to make a point to go out of his way to let that person know that he believes in them and that they are important to the team. When he gets up each day, the first thing he should do to prepare for the day is look for the

name of the person whose “show up day” it is. Over the next 116 days, each person will have his or her own day, consistently with no one left out. He asked what I recommended after the 116 days were completed and I told him to start over at the beginning, this is an on-going process that should never end.

3. Really loving what you do doesn't mean that you find people who love you and then serve them. It means that it is your responsibility to give everyone you serve something to love about you and what you are doing for them by revealing yourself as a human being to those that you are in charge of or hoping to lead at some point. It is important, whether you are talking one-on-one or standing in front of a crowd, that you say “This is who I am, this is what I believe, this is what I believe we can achieve together if we put our hearts into it. I believe in you. Please join me and let's help each other make this happen.”

4. Inspire love; don't try to “motivate” it. Never forget that love is the true inspirational motivator of all great people. Love of something or someone; love of a cause; love of a principle; love of people you work with and the customers you have the opportunity to serve; love for the future; and love for your business. These are the things that truly matter in the world. Without the inspiration of your heart, there is no good reason for you to take a stand, to take a risk, to do what it takes to make a difference in life. Remember, if you don't stand for something, then you lose the energy necessary to keep you from falling for anything. The key is to always be thankful. **MB**

Bryan Dodge • Success is a Journey, Not a Destination!

The Presentation

Fall back in love with your profession as if it were the first day you started. The message is to have consistent upward growth in your life, personally and professionally. Be inspired to bring long-lasting change to your lives, both at work and at home. Maintain balance between work and home. Focus energy and creativity for greater results. Take charge of any situation you are placed in. Implement strategies that teach the importance of setting goals to make your dreams a reality.

The Presenter

Bryan Dodge is an author, professional speaker, business development coach and radio personality. His popularity as a professional speaker stems from his ability to open minds and hearts to help people focus on the most essential aspects in life. For the last 26 years he has inspired his audiences to reach their full potential. In 2010 McGraw-Hill published his second book *The Good Life Rules*. He has also produced several CD and DVD professional development collections that are sold nationally and on his website. He is now in his eighth year of hosting a weekend radio show on Dallas's premier talk radio station, KLIF. To learn more, check out his website, www.bryandodge.com

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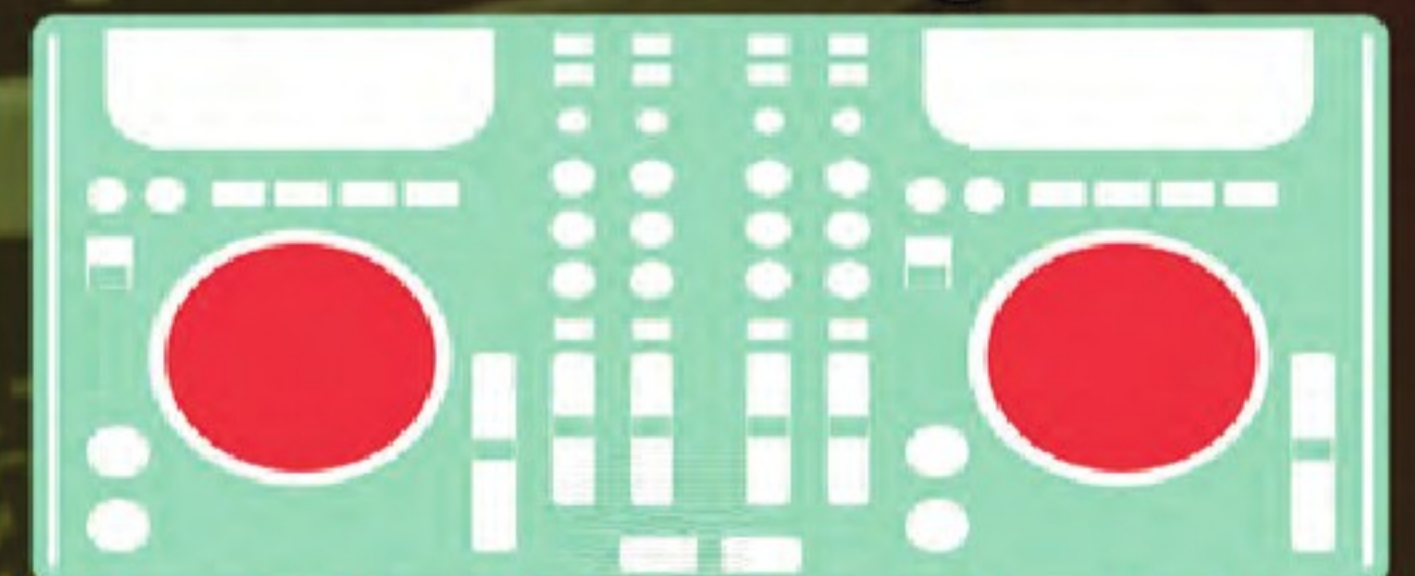
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The Rat Pack Is Back

NO, NOT THAT RAT PACK

By Michael Buonaccorso

Professional trade show producers are taught early on that there are three types of people who hurt their business, and that eventually those people will hurt everyone. With that in mind, it should be the mission of responsible show producers not only to produce good shows, but to help everyone understand the broader ethical responsibility that event organizers have to their attendees, exhibitors, and presenters.

One way to do that is by continually educating these parties about the fact that the only reason the event exists is because of the support of attendees and exhibitors. However, lurking in the shadows you will find a group who doesn't really care about doing the right thing. They don't care about the show, and they don't care about you, unless you help line their pockets.

They are known as Suitcasers, Outboarders, Lobby Rats, and The Chosen Few. You may have seen some of them. You may actually know some of them.

Here's their modi operandi:

Outboarding is when a company or individual makes the decision to be your unethical competitors – otherwise they would hold their event in another city or on another date that was not in direct competition with yours. When they label it a "coincidence" don't think for one minute that it actually was. They have recognized that the event organizer did a good job at marketing their event and delivering customers to one place at one time. The Outboarders make a conscious decision to steal from the event organizer and host an event off-site without the consent of the organizer. When an Outboarder does this during show hours, they have just stolen customers from other exhibitors.

There are exceptions to this rule, but these "unofficial events" are held with the blessing of the show organizer, because those producing them reach out to the producers and usually find a schedule that can be a win-win for both parties.

Suitcasing is when a representative of a company either registers as an attendee, or has no badge at all, when they should be registered as an exhibitor and have a presence in the exhibit area. They then actively solicit business from attendees, by handing out flyers in hallways, leaving printed material on tables, etc. – without paying to be an exhibitor. Obviously, this is directly stealing revenue from the conference, as well as stealing from the official exhibitors and being deceitful and confusing to the attendees. Nothing upsets exhibitors quite as much as a suitcaser.



They are always reported to the event organizer by angry exhibitors.

Lobby Rat: This is a person who doesn't pay for the conference but sits in the hotel lobby where the event is hosted and networks and socializes with event attendees. They're not really Suitcasers because they don't have a stealth sales agenda. If they have any agenda at all, it's simply to soak up the show vibe and maybe be able to say "I was there" when they really weren't.

The Chosen Few: These people would never think of purchasing a pass. For some reason, they feel entitled, by their very presence, to be granted free access to everything. Unlikely they would ever walk out on their check at a restaurant (or maybe they would), but they have no problem letting honest, paying trade show attendees indirectly pick up their tab. A common strategy is to persuade an exhibitor to compromise their ethical behavior and try to get them in as an "employee."

Many years ago, when we all used CDs, there was a similar test of ethics. Bootlegs ran rampant. And if anyone knew what a bogus, illegal disc looked like, it should have been a DJ. With their hokey artwork and verbiage, lack of picture sleeves or cases, it was obvious these were illegal burn jobs, stealing revenue from the record labels, and subsequently, the artists. Where was the

outrage? There wasn't any. They were neat compilations of the music the DJ wanted, so who cared where they came from?

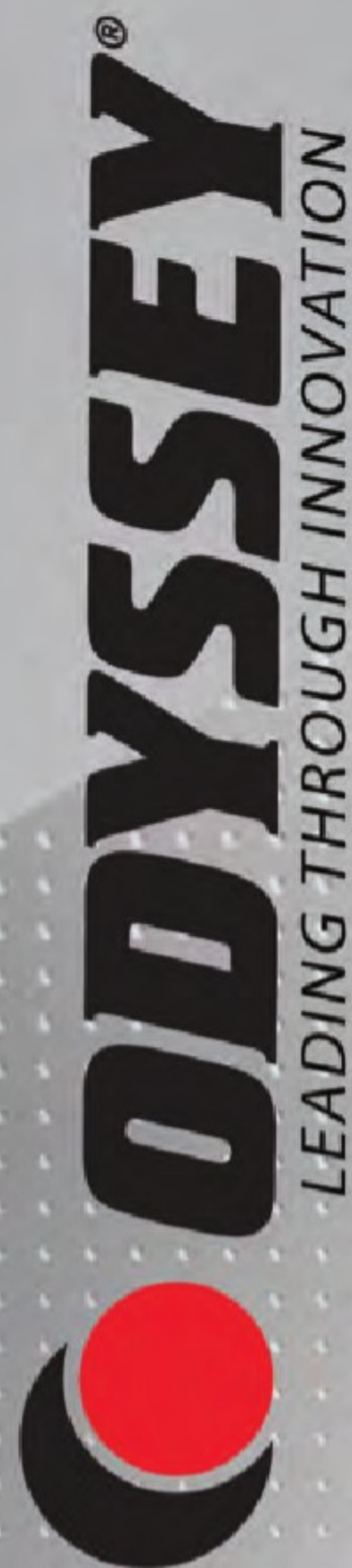
Due to a lack of understanding of the overall harm done, many honest attendees can be supportive of or totally oblivious that the behavior of the characters described above shows a total lack of integrity. Like the illegal discs, those who indulged got what they wanted. When Pete Rose was banned from baseball, it didn't diminish the demand for his autograph. "He didn't really do anything wrong." But what if everyone did this? The results should be obvious: Eventually show producers would be unable to meet their monetary objectives and these events would cease to happen.

In anticipation of the rewrite of my book *A Different Spin*, which will be released in 2016 in coordination with the 25th anniversary of Mobile Beat, it's time to tell the rest of the story. If you truly care about the future of the industry that never was, there's still time to do something about it. The future is in your hands.

Postscript: At this year's MBLV event, however, we're going to expose the rats and their ilk. Armed with registration lists of bona fide attendees and exhibitor employees, our special Rat Patrol will seek out and expose these contemptible characters. In a unique behind the scene report, we will show you in photos and videos these deplorable creatures as they take their positions. **MB**



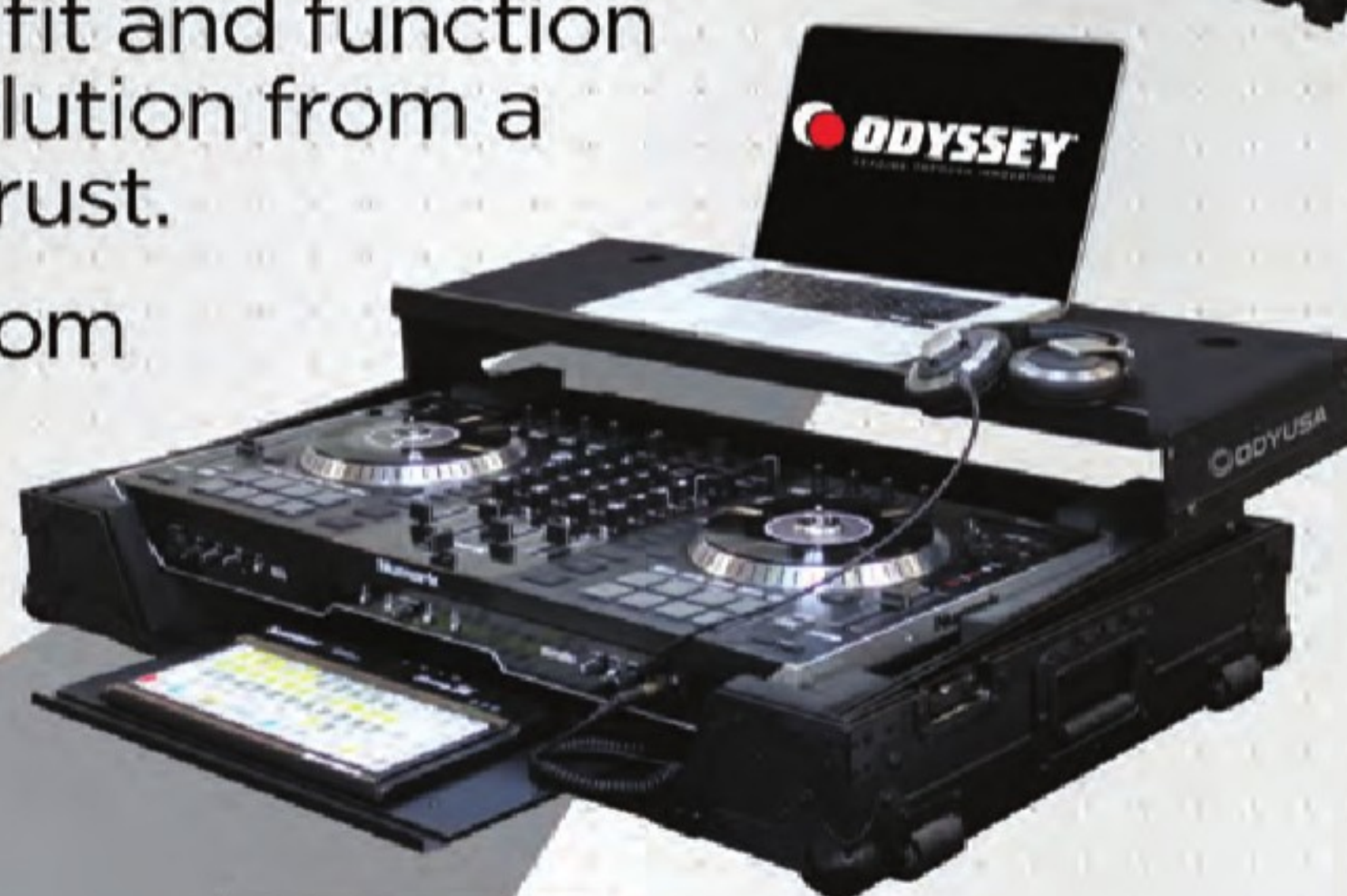
Mike Buonaccorso has been the producer of all the Mobile Beat Las Vegas shows, including summer events in Cleveland, Chicago, Orlando, New York and New England. He received his training from, and past membership in IAEE (International Association of Exhibitions and Events) and SISO (Society of Independent Show Organizers). His book, A Different Spin, can be obtained at www.adifferentspin.info.



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Weekday Tech Ideas

By Rob Peters and Keith Alan

Sometimes in looking for weekday gigs, you need to think outside of the box and look at developing a service that's unique to the market place, or that allows you to use your existing DJ equipment to create some additional revenue.

Those two principles are the basis for any successful weekday revenue stream for any DJ business. Let's discuss some technology that can help you become more successful.

KID-FRIENDLY FUN

Entertaining kids can be a great way to increase midweek income. Day care centers, moms clubs, shopping areas, community park and recreation programs and even elementary school field days can be great resources. Having a kid-friendly personality, using appropriate and clean edits of music that kids love, and interactive dances to keep them moving are key elements for success with these types of events. To be successful, you need to project your personality into your performance. Using a reliable headset microphone allows you to keep your hands free and frees you to be away from the gear and out with your audience. Kids respond when you are out with them and doing what they do (They love dances where they can follow along).

Another advancement that can be helpful is with the speakers you use for these events. Bluetooth speakers can allow you to choose and play music from an iPod or your smartphone. You can continue to entertain and not have to run back to your gear every

time you need to change the music because you can do it using the Bluetooth feature and load your playlist right onto your device. Just remember to make sure that you are in "Airplane Mode" during your performance; an incoming phone call will startle the kids and disrupt the fun. Also remember that Bluetooth has a limited range, so be aware of how far you are from your gear.

Speaking of wireless, one of the fastest developing areas of technology is that of wireless video. The Nyrius ARIES Pro is pretty amazing in both its video quality and range. While wireless video will never be as good as wired HDMI, it offers a great alternative to running cable. You can really get creative and get two wireless systems and a powered HDMI splitter. This comes in handy when using my Extreme Bingo program from DigiGames. As long as the TV has a USB, you're good to go. This will work with any video that comes out of your computer. Hooking into a house video system has never been easier, and that makes it an easier sell to the venue, as well.

With the success of the Disney movie *Frozen*, consider offering a Snow Party. You can easily create this with your existing gear, music from the movie (yes, including "Let It Go") and adding a snow machine. For party ideas, doing a simple Google search reveals activities and products that can be used safely indoors, such as a snowman making contest, or a snowball toss featuring ping pong balls. (But when promoting your service, do not reference the movie or character names unless you would like Olaf and his legal team to pay you a visit or send you a letter.)

Another great idea is bubbles. Anyone with kids knows that bubbles can be a way to attract and keep their attention. In fact, Bubble Parties (www.bubbleparties.com), are fast becoming very popular with DJs as a legitimate program that helps disc jockeys pursue this market. Kids love bubbles, and with some knowledge, creativity and a kid-friendly personality, you can create some nice midweek revenue.

There is more to entertaining young children than just setting up, playing music

and turning on a bubble machine. But kids' entertainment can be a successful area for you if you have the desire and patience to work with young children.

REPURPOSED EQUIPMENT

Here's a question for you. What are you doing with some of your old gear that's collecting dust in your garage or basement? We all have some; it's part of growing our businesses. Well, clean it up and put together a simple, complete system and offer it as a rental system for sound reinforcement. You can provide it for any type of event that needs a small PA system: Dance recitals, fashion shows, community meetings, press conferences, and chamber of commerce events, just to name a few. Sound reinforcement services can be a great way to have your DJ gear make you money, and you can be compensated additionally for providing yourself as a "technician." Often with these services, you are not the DJ or the MC, but simply the guy or gal who turns the system on and off and makes sure that everything is working properly.

You also may need to invest in some additional gear, including multiple microphones, tabletop and boom microphone stands, cables, and plenty of stage tape. You'll also want to get to know your local professional audio rental companies for additional gear, such as press bridges, phone interfaces, and other items you may be asked to provide. A press bridge is a unit that plugs into an output of your mixing board where members of the media (radio stations, news reporters and tv camera crews) can plug in their recorders to record a feed of the audio from an event such as a press conference. A phone interface allows for someone to be part of a meeting or an event through a phone line that can be patched into your system so everyone can hear them.

Whether it's leveraging new technology like wireless speakers and video, or putting your older technology to new uses, thinking creatively about what your gear can do can help you make more weekday moolah. **MB**



Keith Alan has been in the DJ biz since 1975, started hosting weddings in 1982 and went full-time in 1993. While hosting over 60 weddings a year on the weekends, his mid-week programs generate income through out the year. Outside of the weddings division of Keith Alan Productions, Keith's summer program, Campardy™ has grown from 1 event in 2000, to 75 events within a 6 week window! He is busy with game shows, trivia, photo booths and extreme bingo the other 46 weeks of the year.



For over 25 years, Rob Peters has been entertaining audiences of all ages, at weddings, corporate events, kids' parties and more. Rob started DJing in 1987 and went full time in 1998. He began doing kids' events in 2006, and now performs for over 100 weekday parties each summer. He is the co-owner of Rob Peters Entertainment in Braintree, MA, and runs Bubble Parties, a business program that helps DJs increase their youth event revenue. He is also a seminar presenter and author of *The Business Of Mobile DJing* from ProDJ Publishing.

MUSIC MIX #1 - ABC DJ SERVICES

AC DC - Thunder Struck	2pa - California Love	Dixie Chicks - Goodbye Earl	Foreigner - Juke Box Hero	Billy Ray Cyrus - Achy Breaky Heart
Eagles - Life In The Fast Lane	Bobby Darren - Mac The Knife	Billy Squire - The Stroke	Bon Jovi - You Give Love A Bad Name	Brooks and Dunn - My Maria
Brooks and Dunn - Boot Scootin Boogie ...	Def Leppard - Pour Some Sugar On Me	Tommy Tutone 867-5309	Billy Joel - You May Be Right	Alabama - If Your Gonna Play In Texas
Afroman - Cause I Got High	Abba - Dancing Queen	Bob Dylan - Stuck in the Middle With You	Big & Rich - Save A Horse (Ride A Cowboy)	Buster Poindexter - Hot Hot Hot
Beatles - Obladi, Oblada, Life Goes On	Cars - Let the Good Times Roll	C and C Music Factory - Gonna Make You Sweat	ABBA - Take A Chance On Me	Carrie Underwood - Before He Cheats

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Avoiding Catastrophic Gear Fails

**GOOD ADVICE FOR
AVERTING DISASTER**

By Robert Lindquist

While the modern day crop of components that comprise a DJ (or band) PA are extremely reliable, there is no denying that all things—even the operators of said gear—have a finite lifespan. Oh, that sinking feeling when setting up at an event and finding that a critical component is refusing to rise to its appointed task. I can probably count on one hand the number of times I've had to deal with a catastrophic gear fail, but it can and does happen. Troubleshooting your system is not what you want to be doing when the bridal party is lined up and waiting to be introduced.

Fortunately, speakers, amps, mixers, computers and controllers typically have the lowest failure rate. Most of the time—as in 90%—problems are cable, cord or connector-related. It may only be a \$5 plug that got bent the wrong way during the last tear down, but you still have to find it and fix it.

For example, a couple of summers ago, we had a speaker take an unexpected stage dive at a wedding reception (no human injuries). The apparent damage was minimal, just an easily removable dent from the grill. The show went on without any further complications. The following weekend, however, (using a different set of speakers) we discovered that one side was cutting in and out. The troubleshooting required getting

inside the case and switching things around until the problem could be isolated. It took nearly 30 minutes to find that the gremlin was hiding inside a TRS plug coming out of the back of a processor. The plug looked fine, but when the outside jacket was removed, it was easy to see that one of the leads had become unattached. "Hmmm," I thought to myself, "How could this have happened?" Then I remembered what had happened the previous weekend. When the speaker took its leap, it pulled the cable and apparently put just enough strain on the connector to stress it. When it was coiled up at the end of the evening, the tiny wire broke. We had focused on the damage to the speaker, and forgotten about the cable.

So what's the take away?

First, if a piece a gear gets knocked down, knocked over, or dropped, inspect the whole signal chain. The gremlin could be hiding where you least expect. Second, don't scrimp on cables and connectors. Although any cable or connector can break when subjected to enough stress, you'll find that quality products intended for professional use (not home use) will provide more reliable service. When it comes to connectors, Bill Cronheim, of Entertainment Systems Corp in Kilmarnock, VA, (a professional sound company) recommends Neutrik, which fortunately have become more and more the pro audio standard. For cables, Planet Waves, Monster and Hosa are usually quite trustworthy.

SPEAKER IS OUT

After cables and connectors, the next potential problem area involves loudspeakers—active and passive. The main reason for this (and most multi-system operators will agree) is that some DJs just don't understand what "clipping" is and why it's bad. No matter how much you crank the bass and gain going to a 12" or even 15" two-way loudspeaker, it simply will not produce the chest pounding bass of a subwoofer; it will just break the speaker. If clients are consistently demanding "MORE BASS" then the time has come to buy subwoofers.

On powered loudspeakers, the Achilles' heel can be the switch gear on the back panel. While knobs and switches are typically mounted on a recessed panel, they are not impervious to damage, especially during load-in or load-out. Start by keeping them covered. There are several types of covers available. Bill Cronheim recommends padded Tuki Covers (tuki-covers.com) to keep your speakers looking like new, and he also recommends keeping a can of semi-gloss spray paint on hand for quick touch ups.

Speaker covers will help but they don't eliminate the possibility of a knob or switch getting bent or broken off. A busted knob on the outside may be telling you there's a bigger problem inside. Powered speakers are generally very reliable, but regardless of how careful you are, stuff happens. While the conventional wisdom is "If one goes down I can still get through the evening with the other," that sort of thinking really short changes the client—it's best to bring a back-up so you can give the client what they are paying you for.

IT'S NOT COMPUTING

The next component that can send your blood pressure to new heights is your laptop. I am horrified by the condition of some of the laptops that I have seen DJ use—cracked screens, dead batteries, busted keyboards, loose connectors and more. First off, if your computer is in questionable condition, then it needs to be repaired or replaced, period. Without it you may be dead in the water. Secondly, even if your computer is in good shape, main-

tenance software should be run at regular intervals, along with cleaning the keyboard and spraying dust away from the vents.

PROTECTION

As mentioned previously, the best way to protect speakers is to keep them covered when not in use. But what about the rest of your system? Case mounting your main components will not only protect them, but can make set-up and tear-down breeze easy. Canute J. Chiverton, of Houston, Texas says, "I use rolling racks and DJ stations to house my equipment. This eliminates the need to constantly plug and unplug cables. Even my speaker wires are pre-wired into the racks so all I have to do is roll out the speaker ends. Laptop, video monitors/screens, and lighting are the only external devices that require connecting on site. With the exception of my laptop, all my equipment resides in a full-sized custom van. This also eliminates unnecessary loading and unloading."

Keeping gear clean and dust-free can play a big part in enhancing reliability. Joe Martin in Whitcha Falls, TX carries a feather duster primarily for this purpose (we'll not talk about the secondary purpose). Ted Cannon in Huntsville, AL, says "Once a year I blow the dust out of amps and fans. I replace connectors on speaker wires every couple of years with un-tarnished ones."

MICROPHONE MAINTENANCE

With wireless, it's all about the batteries. Steve Wozniak in San Jose, CA suggests charging up your rechargeable microphone batteries the night before each event and having a full set of backup batteries "just in case." (Steve's "DJ Check List" accompanies this article).

TWO-FOLD PROBLEM FOR MULTI-SYSTEM OPERATORS

For owners of multi-system DJ companies, who have invested tens of thousands of dollars in audio and lighting equipment, the number one cause of gear failure is inadequate staff training. The number two cause is neglecting to fire the DJs who don't respect the investment that has been made by the service owner.

Most multi-system DJ services have a tried and true training program that covers everything there is to know about the care of the gear. Unfortunately, some DJs just don't understand that there's a limit to how much abuse a PA system can take. Running a system into clipping for hours on end not only shortens a speaker's lifespan, it sounds like crap to the crowd. I don't care how drunk they are.

Training basics should include:

1 - Proper equipment set-up, and the order that components should be powered up.

2 - How to roll cables using the over-under technique (Search YouTube)

3 - How to properly balance and match mixer output gain with powered speakers.

4 - What not to do with EQ (Like crank the bass to speakers that can't reproduce it)

5 - What it means when the mixer is "in the red" or the lights on the speakers are flashing.

6 - How to tell when something is not right. In a business that's all about sound, it seems impossible to believe that there are some DJs who can't tell when a speaker has one foot in the grave.

7 - Why drinks (even water) should never come near the mixing board, mic or computer.

Steve Wozniak's Checklist

- Contact Location to Confirm Arrival/Setup Time, Room
- Van: Check Gas, Tire Pressure, Parking \$\$\$
- Location Directions, Phone Number, Contact Name
- Event Timeline, Special instructions, Song Requests
- DJ Console and Stand
- #1 Luggage Bag with 2 Laptops and Console Cover
- #2 Luggage Bag with 2 Microphones, Gooseneck, 2 Headsets, 2 Console Lights
- 1 or 2 Amp Boxes
- 2, 4, 6, or 8 Passive/Active Speaker Cabinets
- Bag(s) with Speaker Stands and Poles
- #1 Footlocker with all Electrical Cords and Cables
- #2 Footlocker with Wash Lights and 4 Mirror Ball Lights
- #3 Footlocker with DJ Lights
- Uplights
- Mirror Ball
- Bag with Mirror Ball Stand
- Bag with Mirror Ball Hook
- Cell Phone
- Camera for Event Pics to Post on Facebook
- Spare Contact Lens
- Clothes Bag with: Suit or Tux, Pants, Shirt, Tie, Shoes
- Anti-fatigue Pad
- Gaffer Tape, Electrical Tape
- Clipboard, Paper, Pens, Request Sheets (school only)
- Hula Hoops, Limbo Stick
- Microphone Stand
- DJ Toolbox
- First Aid Kit
- Optional: Sunglasses or Hat
- Breath Mints
- Bottled Water
- Snack
- Canopy tent
- Even More Extension Cords and Surge Protection Strips

If, to you at least, most of this advice is just common sense, that's encouraging. Now we need to get the message out to those who are showing up to play with substandard, unmaintained sound systems that do a disservice to their clients and to our profession as a whole. **MB**



After a 20-year broadcast radio career, Robert Lindquist built a successful mobile DJ business, and by the late '80s he had also written his first book, *Spinnin'*, a DJ how-to. In 1990, he became the founding publisher of Mobile Beat. With the Live2Play Network (www.L2pnet.com), aimed at the live sound realm, he has pioneered online publishing. Along with being a broadcaster, publisher and Internet pioneer, he's also a sax player, writer, gear reviewer and one of the regulars behind the board at his local church.

Gear Needs Vs. Gear Wants

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH YOUR GEAR CRAVINGS

By Joe Bunn

The majority of this issue of *Mobile Beat* is about gear and tech. This writer LOVES anything techy, new, shiny, geeky in the DJ world. I WANT IT ALL. However, as a small business owner, you MUST distinguish between Need and Want. Let's dig into this a little bit deeper.

Every ad in our beloved *Mobile Beat* Magazine is dripping with the hottest, sexiest new gear; your Facebook ad feed is steaming with the greatest gear known to man; and every Guitar Center and Sam Ash seem to be having a sale with 0% interest. It's all too much for a DJ to handle! Trust me guys, I've been there, but you have to control yourself sometimes. As consider making new purchases for this year, think, "What do I NEED that will make me money and pay for itself fast?" You need to generate a quick R.O.I. (Return on Investment) when you work for yourself.

Make a list of what you need, not want, and start from there. Speakers looking rough or sound like garbage? Get new ones—that is a smart purchase. Is your computer lagging or shutting down during gigs? Get a new one immediately! Do your black speaker stands look like they got run over? Grab some new ones. I think you get the point. These are the things that you need NOW to have you ready for the next wedding season.

While you are still in the "need mode," think about the add-ons that you offer or want to offer. If you are like our company, many of our clients now book us to do the audio for their actual wedding ceremony. If you are using your DJ rig for this and carrying it back and forth between the ceremony site and reception location, not only do you look unprofessional, you aren't using the right stuff. Get yourself a separate "ceremony rig" in which you have the BEST wireless lavalier microphones that you can possibly afford (I recommend two units and prefer Shure or Sennheiser). These will be for your officiant and possibly the groom if he has written vows. Also, get yourself a great handheld wireless mic and stand for your readers or in case they have a singer. You will

also need a line mixer with 4 to 8 inputs for your mics, iPod and possibly any musicians that show up and need an input. Instead of having a monster 15" cabinet on a stand for the ceremony, try something like a Mackie DLM8, a QSC K8, or even a Bose L1 Compact. That's all you really need to pull off a great-sounding ceremony! Plus, you can charge top dollar for this service because I can assure you that the hotel where they are having said function is going to charge double or triple what you quote.

Ok, now let's shift gears for a minute. It's OK to WANT, but go about it the smart way. Is your three-year-old DJ controller still working like the day you bought it? If the answer is yes, then STAY AWAY from buying a new one. Like my grandma always said,

"If it ain't broke, don't try to fix it, boy!" Not only will it cost you a pretty penny, but it's going to cost you time trying to re-learn the 100 extra buttons that they added to the new version!

Maybe you want to invest in something new for your company for 2015 like uplights or a photobooth perhaps? Ok, maybe that is smart money, but before running out and buying that stuff, do some research. First, research what the gear is going to cost you. Post online in some of the DJ forums and see which brands

DJs are really liking and then price them out from somewhere reputable. After that, do a little market research. What are the DJs and lighting companies in your area getting for 16 uplights? For a four-hour photobooth rental? Then do a little simple math and think "How many times do I have to rent this stuff out to get my dough back?" If it's several years, it's probably not a smart move.

I've been DJing almost 30 years now (since I was 13). I've bought, returned, used, sold, had, broken, thrown and destroyed almost every piece of DJ gear/speaker that has been manufactured during that time and for what reason? None! It was just dumb spending. If your stuff looks good, sounds good, you're awesome on it, and you rock parties, then keep on trucking with what you have!

Have a great year DJs! I'll see you all at *Mobile Beat* Las Vegas! **MB**



Joe Bunn started his DJ career at age 14, when his mom drove him to gigs in her wood-paneled Jeep Wagoneer. His company now does about 400 weddings a year and another 200+ private, corporate and charity events. He has been on the board of both ISES and NACE, founded the Triangle DJ Association, and has also won numerous industry awards. Recently, he has been helping other DJs grow their businesses as a consultant. He has also presented at major industry events including MBLV. For more info go to www.bunndjcompany.com.

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Good Sound Doesn't Happen By Magic

**KNOWING HOW TO CONJURE UP
QUALITY AUDIO**

By Stu Chisholm



Okay, so the scene was something like this...

While perusing an online DJ forum, the conversation turned to signal processing. You know; all those rack-filling goodies that are supposed to make your sound better. As the discussion progressed, several of the more technically inclined DJs began to talk about how "less is more" when it comes to such toys. I agree, since each component and connection adds more points of failure, more potential noise to the system and, if you don't know what you're doing, massive distortion and sonic artifacts never dreamed of by the musicians or people recording them. Now here comes the "but:"

But that doesn't mean it's all bad, or catalogs wouldn't be filled with 'em.

Also during the discussion, some DJs seemed to be under the impression that powered speakers had no need for such things, as if "active" was some sort of magic talisman that renders perfect sound without any added tweaking or other sweat-breaking required. What would your reaction be to these assertions? I tend to read far more than I write on these pages and forums, but I found this one highly motivational! With a little bit of expansion and artistic license, I wrote:

There is nothing magical or unique about powered speakers; you've simply moved the amplifier from a box between your console and speaker and placed it into the speaker cabinet itself. The sound coming out will only sound as good as the signal coming IN to the speaker. As the Talking Heads once sang, "same as it ever was..."

Yes, some powered speakers have incorporated DSPs (Digital Signal Processors) that process the signal to match the speaker's specific dynamics. Remember the eternal Bose or EV processors that used to be recommended for their passive speakers back in the day? I have some ancient EV S-200s that have a switch that selects between "with EQ" and "without EQ." If your active speakers have built-in DSPs, then you ARE running a processed signal. So stop hatin'. The question is...

DOES IT NEED MORE?

To answer that question, you need to understand exactly what your sound system is doing. What needs to happen is a basic system calibration. This is best done outdoors using a spectrum analyzer, pink noise generator and calibrated mic. This allows you to actually SEE what your system is doing. Start with all components turned ON, but set to neutral. (Aural exciters/Sonic maximizers set to "bypass" and EQs flattened at 0.) Then, with the pink noise running—**CAREFUL!—TOO LOUD CAN KILL A SPEAKER!**—bring up the volume on ONE SIDE ONLY. Adjust it to FLAT on the analyzer using the EQ. When properly done, your sound spectrum should be a straight line. Bring the volume down and repeat the procedure with the opposite channel. At this point, your system is acoustically neutral; you've eliminated any sonic artifacts introduced by your cabinets, cables, processing chain, etc. While sonically neutral, though, it will sound horrible at this point, since our ears are NOT acoustically neutral!

So this is the starting point for "sweetening" the sound. Humans tend to suck at hearing the extreme ends of the sound spectrum, which is why you see equalizers set in the classic "V" pattern. Short of having test discs/files that the sound engineers use, I just pick a piece of music that I know extremely well that has extreme low and high end content. My favorites are the old "Age of Love" techno track, as well as the Scottish National Orchestra's version of "The Planets" by Holst. Tweak until it sounds perfect paying particular attention to the missing lows and extreme high end. Unless you've got hearing damage, your ears are usually the best judges of sound you own! My hearing has taken some hits, so my tweaks are hawked by keeping a wary eye on the spectrum analyzer. Next, punch in your other pro-

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cessors. Adjust as necessary until you're 100% satisfied. At this point, your system is optimized. But wait—there's more!

TRUE COLORS

Every room "colors" your music. The construction of the walls, floors, the floor covering (carpet, tile, wood, etc.), wall treatments, the type of ceiling, the furniture (and chair/table coverings, centerpieces) and on and on ALL impact your sound. For us old schoolers, if your system has two EQs—one in the rack and one on the board or software—use the latter to tweak your sound for each room. Rather than run the whole pink noise profile in each room like I used to do, requiring me to arrive 45 minutes earlier, I instead run the analyzer and get my overall setting to look like it did when I optimized the system. What you see on the analyzer should also match what your ears hear. On those rare occasions when the two conflict, again, let your ears trump your eyes. Of course, when people arrive, it will throw the whole scheme off, but again, you've gotten as close to perfection as you're likely to achieve.

JUST ONE MORE THING...

One thing that has been a game changer since it was introduced is the DriveRack PX Powered Speaker Optimizer from DBX. It contains all of your processing in one unit; EQs, compressors, noise gates, limiters and on and on. Further, if you do decide to pink noise calibrate each and every room you frequent, you can then STORE the settings! If you change nothing in your system, then it can be instantly optimized to the room you're playing at the touch of a button for each subsequent event! (It also contains auto-calibration software.) DMX has updated the unit as technology has progressed and DOES have a unit made especially for powered speakers:

<http://dbxpro.com/en-US/products/driverack-px>

Best of all, it's inexpensive, especially when compared to the cost of having a whole rack full of gear. You save a ton of money and WEIGHT. And before you ask, no, I don't work for DBX or make a buck from 'em. Dammit!

Take care, too, that if you change the placement of your speakers in these pre-set rooms, this can also alter your fine settings. At this point, I'm sure a whole lot of you might be saying, "Why go to all of this effort? Party guests aren't sound engineers! Half the time they're wasted!" There are two quick answers to this question. #1 is the sound fatigue that happens when people are exposed to increased sound levels over time. If you start out your night at a certain level and, by the end of the night have increased it significantly, but you or your audience really didn't notice, it's due to this quirk of human hearing. Nothing can cancel this completely, but smoother, less harsh sound can minimize this effect.

Secondly, you never can tell who might be listening. I recall one family who was planning a wedding and, with the permission of the venue—a large, multi-room banquet facility—walked down the common hall going room to room, only poking their heads in for a few moments. The reason why I remember them? I got the job. "I couldn't believe the difference between your sound and the DJs in the other rooms," they told me. "One was even playing the same tune!"

So that's my answer, with thanks to my fellow long-in-the-tooth colleagues at the "Pro DJ/MC Senior's Tour" Facebook page, and to the legendary Robert Lindquist who posted the meat-and-potatoes of my remarks at his new DJ online experience, MobileEntertainer.com. You guys ROCK! Until next time, safe spinnin'. **MB**



*Stu Chisholm had been collecting music since he was about age 8 and began his DJ career in 1979. After a stint at the Specs Howard School of Broadcast Arts, he studied the DJ arts with famous Michigan broadcaster Bill Henning, interned at Detroit's rock powerhouse, WRIF, and later added voiceover work and club gigs at Detroit's best venues. He has shared his extensive DJ experience through MB columns, as a seminar speaker and through his book, *The Complete Disc Jockey: A Comprehensive Manual for the Professional DJ*.*



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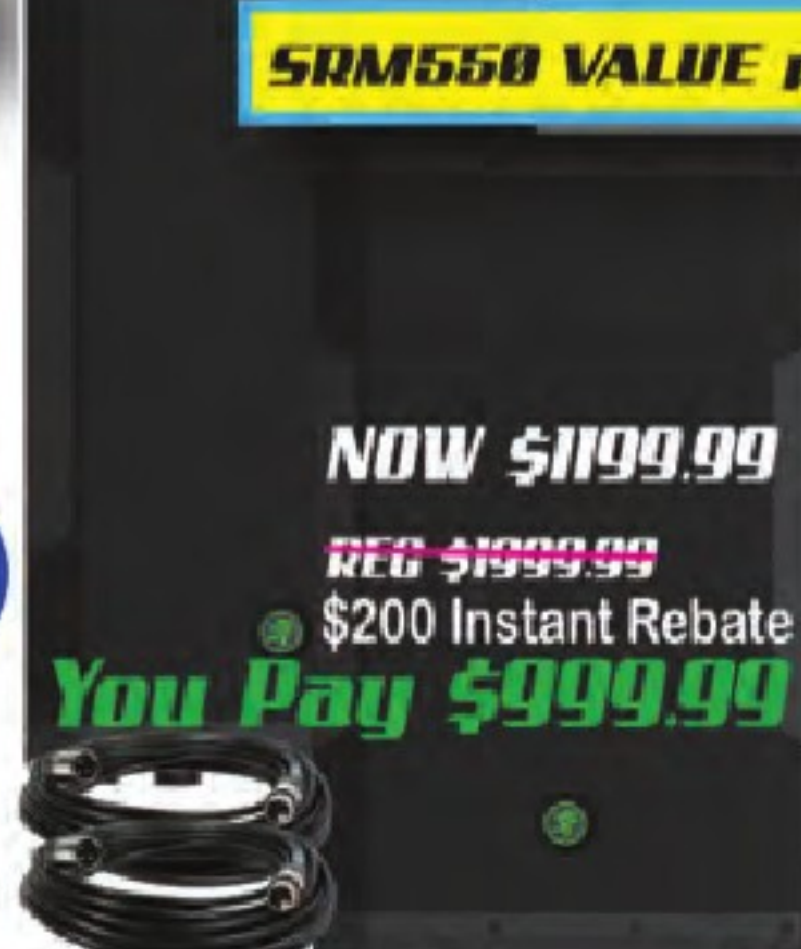
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Brides Care About Subwoofers...

AND OTHER TECH MYTHS DEBUNKED

By Staci Nichols



When I was learning to drive, I recall asking my mom something technical about the car as we were about to set out on our first drive together. I'll never forget how she responded. She said, "You don't need to know why the car works in order to drive it." Was she right? Absolutely. Here's the hole where you put gas when it's on "E"...done! This maternal wisdom is a classic example of how most girls (like the ones who eventually become brides) are typically

socialized. Bottom line: Women like myself are not generally concerned with the nuts and bolts of things.

MYTH #1: BRIDES REACH FOR THEIR WALLETS UPON SEEING YOUR "BOY TOYS"

There is a company in my area that loves showing off a snapshot of the owner standing in his driveway in front of a literal wall of DJ equipment. He is proudly puffing out his chest. You can see his garage door, his basketball hoop...all very elegant. As a former bride, I genuinely feel traumatized seeing imagery like this. No, seriously, I get a lump in my throat just thinking about it. Why not just get some "truck balls" for your website? Yech!

When was the last time you saw a picture on a catering website of their kitchen? I know I never have. I see pictures of the end results—plates

of delicious food. How about a caterer standing like Captain Morgan next to a fridge, blender, wok, or box of onions?

My Challenges to Wedding DJs in 2015

- Invest the money you were planning to spend on equipment this year and put it towards training instead. See which one delivers a better ROI for your business! Take a MarBecca, Make It Grand, or Entertainment Experience workshop this year. In September, give the Wedding MBA a try. How about a course from Dubspot.com or the Spin Academy?
- Remove any pictures from your website that are reminiscent of Radio Shack.



DJ and Officiant Staci Nichols owns Revolution Weddings and Country Wedding DJ in San Diego. Her wedding know-how has appeared on Wed Loft, Offbeat Bride, Wedding Planner Magazine and others. She has a B.A. from the University of Redlands' Johnston Center for Integrative Studies in Sociology. Even though you might catch her hosting the Stagecoach Festival's Honky Tonk or DJing at a local club, she's a wedding junkie through and through.

Cold Facts on Women and Tech

Teenage girls use computers and the Internet at rates similar to boys but are five times less likely to consider a technology-related career. Source: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/monique-morrow/women-in-technology-prospects_b_6102040.html

A recent Google study about computer science showed that women found these terms to be inter-related: “boring,” “difficult,” and “technology.” Source: <http://www.techrepublic.com/article/the-state-of-women-in-technology-15-data-points-you-should-know/>

Fewer than 8% of those working in engineering occupations are female. Levels of segregation are highest in the Audio Video sector. Source: http://www.academia.edu/700694/WAVE-ing_Goodbye_to_the_Women_Explaining_Gender_Segregation_in_the_Audio_Video_Industries

It's laughable! The only person who cares about your subwoofer is you...and maybe your DJ buddies.

MYTH #2: BRIDES WANT YOU TO BE FRONT AND CENTER AT THEIR WEDDINGS

Style-savvy clients want their DJs to broadcast from the parking lot. When you prominently display your equipment on your website, you are sending a subtle message to that potential client saying, “That's what your wedding pictures will look like if you hire me.” Instead, you want potential clients to think, “That's how much fun I could have,” or “That's how much I could impress my guests.” Guests, like brides, are predominantly impressed by your amazing MC skills or your uncanny ability to read the dance floor, not so much by your laser light show. Replace all those pictures on your website of empty “uplit” ballrooms with pictures of happy brides. Remember nobody buys a power drill—they buy a hole.

MYTH #3: BRIDES ENJOY AUTOMATED WEDDING PLANNING FORMS

How much do you like having to remember one more password? How much do you like paying an arm and a leg for something to find out that when you have a question you're re-directed to some impersonal web page? If you use automated planning forms, be sure to set up face-to-face client meetings to show them how to use your system and help them get the ball rolling on filling it out. I personally noticed a huge drop-off in customer satisfaction when I went 100% automated—I had to scale it back significantly.

MYTH #4: BRIDES WILL BE IMPRESSED WHEN YOU TALK ABOUT

“GOBOS” ON YOUR WEBSITE

Let's get rid of the tech jargon. Why not offer clients “custom monogram lights”? VHF vs. UHF microphones--brides don't care.

RE-THINKING YOUR APPROACH TO ALL THAT BLACK, METAL, CABLE-Y STUFF

Rather than feeling the air let out of your tires upon reading this, re-strategize about how you can use this info to your advantage. If you read my article “A

'Bride's-Eye' View on DJ Equipment” in issue 157, you already know how to make the look of your equipment wedding-worthy. In a nutshell, today's style-me-pretty bride knows she wants an awesome-looking wedding (she spends \$2,400 on average for her photos, over \$2,000 on her flowers...but just \$1,000 for her DJ) and probably doesn't realize she needs a rock star DJ. So play off her over-focus on the aesthetics of the wedding by showing her how low-profile your equipment is, how amazing your attire will be, how your presence can add to the elegance of her day rather than detract from it.

I have no shame in confessing that I had been DJing successfully for years before I knew what most of the jargon meant, what all the buttons did, what all the cables were--because, like mama said, I didn't need to know to get a dance floor rocking. And brides don't need (or want) to know either. **MB**



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Tune Up

MAINTAINING YOUR MOST IMPORTANT PERFORMANCE TOOL

By Mike Ficher



About every 6,000 to 12,000 miles, you stop by your neighborhood automotive maintenance facility to get the oil changed, the air pressure in the tires checked, the wiper fluid replenished, the interior vacuumed, the windows cleaned, and the filters and fluid levels checked and filled.

On a weekly or bi-weekly basis, you run a disk cleanup utility, a disk defragmenter, an unneeded files removal program, and an outdated registry review on your laptop or computer. On a daily basis, you back up your key files automatically.

You wheel your manually-powered two-wheeler down to the nearby bicycle shop to check the brakes, replace or refill the tires, ensure the gears are operating at optimum efficiency, clean the chain, moderate the gear changer cable tension, and wash the bike. Or, you might do that yourself.

Every few gigs, you clean and re-wrap your speaker wires, remove the dust from your amplifier, wash the foam cover for your microphone, sanitize your laptop keyboard, wipe down your tablet screen, and clean your mix board.

What about YOU? Yes, you. What about a tune-up for you?

In our unending quest to provide structure to our lives, extend the length of our investments, and ensure our toys and equipment continue functioning at a high rate of performance for a long time, we sometimes forget about our most important asset, ourselves.

Funny, in a personality-driven business where burnout is as visible as the traffic on a Southern California freeway, many a mobile entertainer eschews his or her refreshment at the expense of moving closer to the roadway gridlock.

Take a second, step back, and consider a tune-up for you, the performer.

Look at the following areas in your life, take out the yellow pad, draw a line down the middle, and on the left evaluate what

is going well and on the right identify areas of potential growth and improvement.

EXERCISE

Entertainment is a physically demanding occupation. Being in shape can help deal with the sometimes arduous challenges of the business.

According to the Mayo Clinic, "Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed. You may also feel better about your appearance and yourself when you exercise regularly, which can boost your confidence and improve your self-esteem."

Kick a soccer ball. Throw a football. Ride a bike. Walk to the store instead of drive. Shoot a basketball at the local playground. Enroll in a yoga class. Join a fitness center. Assess and find small ways to add exercise to your daily lives.

"Exercise and physical activity are a great way to feel better, gain health benefits and have fun. As a general goal, aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity every day," offers the Mayo Clinic.

In addition, the world famous clinic recommends checking with your doctor before starting a new exercise program, especially if you haven't exercised for a long time, have chronic health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes or arthritis, or you have any concerns.

NUTRITION

Working in the mobile entertainment business does not necessarily lend itself to sound nutrition practices. Eating at irregular hours. Late night post-event runs to fast food outlets. Potential for excessive alcohol consumption. Unbalanced event menus. A recipe for poor nutrition.

The Mayo Clinic recommends consuming between 45 and 65 percent of your daily calories from carbohydrates, between 10 and 35 percent of daily calories from protein and between 20 and 35 percent of daily calories from fats.



*A business analyst by day, Mike Ficher is an actor, voice artist, MC, sportscaster, public address announcer and former mobile entertainer. He is also the host of the weekly syndicated radio program, **The Ultimate Oldies Show**. Mike synthesizes these varied experiences to illuminate historic connectivity and fresh perspectives on the mobile entertainment profession. More info at mikeficher.com.*

Skip the fast food, put some fruit in the van for the ride home. Pass on the event meal. Find ways to eat at more consistent hours.

Moderating your diet for healthier choices can lead to increased energy levels. Eliminating excess fats, sugars and refined carbohydrates, such as candy and white breads, helps prevent blood sugar fluctuations. Unprocessed carbohydrates, including whole grains, fruits and vegetables, are most nutritious. Your body will maintain steady blood sugar and constant energy levels as a result.

Try small, frequent meals to help sustain energy. And, eat a healthy breakfast. Pass on the doughnuts, try oatmeal with fruit. Enjoy the eggs without the bacon. WebMD noted that a Harvard study of more than 17,000 men found that those who frequently ate breakfast cereal -- both refined grain and whole-grain types -- consistently weighed less than those who rarely or never ate breakfast cereal.

Now is a great time to review your food choices for the better.

MENTAL STATE

Do you see the glass as half full or half empty? What scripts are carrying with you from your childhood? How do you approach issues and problems?

An increasing number of studies suggest that not only are positive thinkers healthier and less stressed, they also have

greater overall well-being. According to positive psychology researcher Suzanne Segerstrom, "Setbacks are inherent to almost every worthwhile human activity, and a number of studies show that optimists are in general both psychologically and physiologically healthier."

Psychology expert Kendra Cherry notes that, "Researchers have found that your mind can have a powerful effect on your body. Immunity is one area where your thoughts and attitudes can have a particularly powerful influence. In one study, researchers found that activation in brain areas associated with negative emotions led to a weaker immune response to a flu vaccine."

Cherry does not favor a blinding optimistic approach to life but "instead of ignoring reality in favor of the silver lining, psychologists suggest that positive thinking centers on such things as a belief in your abilities, a positive approach to challenges, and trying to make the most of bad situations. Bad things will happen. Sometimes you will be disappointed or hurt by the actions of others. This does not mean that the world is out to get you or that all people will let you down. Instead, positive thinkers will look at the situation realistically, search for ways that they can improve the situation, and try to learn from their experiences."

While you sustain sound practices in keeping your auto, computer, bicycle and equipment in top shape, take a few moments to tune-up you! **MB**

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The Mobile DJ's Legos

BUILDING AN UNPARALLELED EXPERIENCE AT EVERY EVENT, ONE SONG AT THE TIME

By Jay Maxwell

Both of my children, Rebecca and Robert, are very creative. The things that Robert can develop on his computer amaze me, and Rebecca is an accomplished artist. Their creativity was first displayed, not with a computer or a paintbrush, but with Legos. They both enjoyed building with these small colorful interlocking plastic blocks at an early age. The extent of my ability was to build four walls and call it a fort. Meanwhile, they would build an entire farm, complete with a house with windows and doors. My son soon graduated from putting a few blocks together to buying entire Lego kits, following the step-by-step instructions to create the toy pictured on the outside of the box. When I opened up the box of Legos, all I saw were hundreds of different colored blocks. Robert on the other hand, connected one block to the next in the right order to complete a finished product. A creation he would then proudly display on a shelf.

The premise of a mobile disc jockey is that he plays music. Sounds simple enough – when one song is finished, play the next one. It would be like picking up any Lego block and then randomly picking up another brick to connect the two together. They would probably connect together, but to what effect? That is, just putting Lego blocks together without giving any thought to the finished product would be pointless. Anyone could do it, but only someone with the imagination and creativity can use his skills to effectively connect the Legos together in such a way that a recognizable

structure or toy is formed. The talents needed as a mobile DJ include selecting the song and then selecting the right next song to play after it. This process continues throughout the event until the end of the show.

There were times when my son misread the instructions, or changed his mind, and had to unhook a few Lego bricks to place the right bricks in their place. Likewise, a mobile DJ will often play a song that appears to be the right song to play next, but it clears the dance floor. Mistakes happen – but the experienced DJ will realize the error and soon make the adjustment.

With many of the kits that my son bought, the majority of the bricks looked similar to the other bricks that



Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, *Play Something We Can Dance To*.

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	SONG TITLE	ARTIST	YEAR
1	BABY GOT BACK	SIR MIX-A-LOT	92
2	ICE ICE BABY	VANILLA ICE	90
3	LET ME CLEAR MY THROAT	DJ KOOL	96
4	TOOTSEE ROLL	69 BOYZ	94
5	FUNKY COLD MEDINA	TONE LOC	89
6	BUST A MOVE	YOUNG M.C.	89
7	PUSH IT	SALT-N-PEPA	88
8	WILD THING	TONE LOC	89
9	JUMP AROUND	HOUSE OF PAIN	92
10	BRASS MONKEY	BEASTIE BOYS	87
11	IT TAKES TWO	ROB BASE	88
12	U CAN'T TOUCH THIS	MC HAMMER	90
13	HUMPTY DANCE	DIGITAL UNDERGROUND	90
14	JUMP ON IT (Apache)	SUGARHILL GANG	82
15	BACK THAT THANG UP	JUVENILE	99
16	RAPPER'S DELIGHT	SUGARHILL GANG	80
17	NO DIGGITY	BLACKSTREET	96
18	CALIFORNIA LOVE	2PAC	96
19	SHOOP	SALT-N-PEPA	93
20	WHOOHP THERE IT IS	TAG TEAM	93
21	WHATTA MAN	SALT-N-PEPA	94
22	FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHT	BEASTIE BOYS	87
23	MO MONEY MO PROBLEMS	NOTORIOUS B.I.G.	97
24	DA DIP	FREAK NASTY	97
25	RUMP SHAKER	WRECKX-N-EFFECT	92
26	NOW THAT WE FOUND LOVE	HEAVY D	91
27	HIP HOP HOORAY	NAUGHTY BY NATURE	93
28	WALK THIS WAY	RUN DMC	86
29	JOY AND PAIN	BASE, ROB	88
30	DA BUTT	E.U.	88
31	NUTHIN' BUT A "G" THANG	DR. DRE	93
32	JUMP	KRIS KROSS	92
33	O.P.P.	NAUGHTY BY NATURE	91
34	HYPNOTIZE	NOTORIOUS B.I.G.	97
35	INSANE IN THE BRAIN	CYPRESS HILL	93
36	GIN AND JUICE	SNOOP DOGG	94
37	GANGSTA'S PARADISE	COOLIO	95
38	REGULATE	WARREN G	94
39	2 LEGIT 2 QUIT	MC HAMMER	91
40	MAMA SAID KNOCK YOU OUT	LL COOL J	91

we already had at our house. The key was putting them in the right order to make a unique item. This is the same challenge faced by a mobile DJ at every event. We often use many of the same songs, but by changing the order of the songs to fit the mood of the event, actually create a unique experience that is tailored to bring excitement to a particular crowd. Hardly an event goes by that line dance songs like Cupid Shuffle or Wobble are not played – but are they played at the beginning of the event, or after a few slow songs? It depends, again, on the mood of the crowd. At every event, the DJ has the opportunity to take his musical “bricks,” arranging them one after the other, in order to create an unparalleled experience.

One of the genres that seem to be a part of any mobile DJ's mix, regardless of the event, is early rap music with songs like Ice Ice Baby or Bust a Move to raise the temperature of the dance floor a few degrees. Artists like LL Cool J, Run D.M.C. and Heavy D & the Boys are still requested even when people say they do not want rap music at the event, they often still write those favorites on their playlist. This issue's list contains the 40 most requested “old school” raps songs from the 1980s and 1990s. As with all lists featured here, these songs represent the songs that still “work” to get people on the dance floor. It is the mobile DJ's task to determine when best to place these songs in the mix, like a Lego Master with his bricks, to build the perfect string of tunes for the party.

There are many classic early rap songs omitted from the list like The Breaks (Kurtis Blow), The Message (Grand Master Flash) and Planet Rock (Afrika Bambaataa & The Soul Sonic Force) simply due to the fact that they typically are no longer requested at most events. Keep in mind that the lists created for each of this feature's charts are not all-time best of list, but are the most requested songs that are still relevant to today's party scene. These songs are still requested and more importantly still get people on the dance floor when someone shouts, “Play Something We Can Dance To!” **MB**

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Tom Quiner, DJ Marketer

By Ryan Burger

Back when Mobile Beat was only a magazine, the Internet didn't exist, and I had personally only been DJing for a couple of years, Tom Quiner at Breakthrough Marketing was already serving DJs. Tom and Karen at Breakthrough are based in Des Moines, Iowa about 10 minutes away from the Mobile Beat headquarters, but we're more likely to run into each other in Las Vegas, at MBLV.

I was able to get together with him and talk about how far marketing for DJs has come during his career of over 25 years.

Tom Quiner : Founded the business back in 1987, so just a year after you got into the business. We immediately began working with a lot of people in the event business. Back in those days I was doing a lot of speaking, conducting marketing seminars with various wedding publications throughout the county. I got to know a lot of people in the wedding industry. DJs really were a market niche that stood out. They needed what I had to offer, which is how to put together a really kick-butt direct mail piece. Back in those days direct mail was the target marketing method of choice. A lot of the DJs were getting mailing lists from various wedding publications, but they didn't know what to do with them...We began developing the materials that they needed to send out to the brides and we ended up connecting with a

lot of DJs and working with them in all 50 states and Canada."

Ryan Burger : And direct mail at that point was anything from postcards to advertisements in a bridal publication, in print, brochures, all that kind of stuff. And I guess since then, the way you market to the different segments like brides, schools, event professionals, etc. How did things change once the Internet became a big promotional avenue for you?

T Q : Yeah. The Internet has been a dream come true for marketers. When I was out doing a lot of speaking I used to say this: Marketing is very easy. You simply have to reach the right person at the right time with the right message. On the other hand, marketing's very hard because you have to reach the right person at the right time with the right message.

R B : Now, a bride that sees a DJ at a bridal fair is going to pick up a nice brochure that hopefully matches with that website—and we'll get to that point in a second—they'll probably get a postcard in the mail a week after the bridal fair from the DJ; they'll get an email from the DJ company saying thanks for stopping by our booth. And they're going to see the website, hopefully prompted by one of those other elements. And you can work with them on each portion of that.

T Q : I have looked at the emails that have been written





in their contact info. Sometimes we'll have a client—like we were just working with a DJ down in Florida last week and he loved our VidBit, but he asked if we could use his voiceover. I said sure. So he just sent his voiceover. We charged a little bit of a surcharge to plug it in. So he ended up with a very customized VidBit. We then give that DJ a lifetime territory protection in his area for that VidBit.

Tom summarized sales and marketing very well by saying: "You know, there's a saying in marketing, that people buy from people they like, and they buy from people they like and trust. So everything that we're doing in the marketing materials that we develop, whether it's print or whether it's online, whether it's email or whether it's the video content—we're trying to build a relationship that usually involves the use of emotion. We're trying to take what a DJ wants to say and say it better than he or she can say it on their own. We want to say it so it is absolutely crystal clear to his prospects, so that his or her prospects know exactly what the next step is, and that it's compelling."

More information on Breakthrough can be found at BreakthroughMarketing.Com or by calling them at 515-276-9266. **MB**

by DJs in this industry for years. In fact, I've been looking at the way DJs communicate for however many years I've been in business; I've lost track—since 1987. In defense of DJs, they do a great job of being entertainers. I can't do that. I'm not a DJ, and they're awesome at that. But their strength is not how to write. And they're no different than any other small business person. That's why I'm here. The classic example. I bet there's probably a thousand DJs every day in this country who are sending out an email to a bride that starts off "Congratulations on your upcoming wedding."

R B : Like the other thousand she gets that week.

T Q : Yeah. The whole technique of subject lines is really quite different than it would have been in traditional marketing that I would have studied back at Drake University when I was getting my degree in business and marketing.

But it's not just that it's all about emails now. Once the bride gets that email, she has to have somewhere to go to, something to see. Their attention has been peaked and Tom works with DJs and other event professionals on websites with content management systems that they can update. He's also developed a unique tool called Vid-Bits. It goes back to the brochures he used to produce, where companies would just add their name, phone number and other info, and then he would print them. Tom went on to tell us about this new video format.

T Q : The VidBit in a way is a video variation on it. We simply have developed these short-form video Webmercials, we call them, or VidBits, that allow a DJ to create a little bit of video content on their Facebook pages and on their websites. The way we do it, we have some photos, we have some music; we might have live video footage in there as well. We plug

The collage displays various marketing assets for Tom Gavin's DJ Delights. At the top right is a brochure titled "Tom Gavin's DJ DELIGHTS" featuring a photo of a wedding reception and the text "Decor Lighting Specialists". Below it is a video player showing a crowd dancing at a wedding, with the text "IRRESISTIBLE FUN" overlaid. To the right of the video is a website screenshot for "Tom Gavin's D.J. DELIGHTS". The website features a navigation bar with links like "Home", "Weddings", "Lighting", "Photo Booth", etc. The main content area shows a smiling couple, and there's a promotion for a \$100 gift card from IKEA.

Straight Talk on Karaoke

GERRIE WOO TAKES A NO-NONSENSE APPROACH TO KJ'ING

By Mike "Dr. Frankenstand" Ryan

Gerrie Woo, one of the original Hollywood Playboy Bunnies, got a wild "hare" for karaoke and ten years ago started hosting a karaoke show at the Sheraton Hotel in La Jolla California. Woo, as she prefers to be called, says it was more "rabbit's foot" luck than a wild hare: "I was doing a friend a favor...it started with just one day a week, then two, then three, then four then five...etc.

And the lady can sing! After her time working for Mr. Hefner, Woo joined Jack "Mr. Bongo" Costanzo, who introduced the bongo drum to jazz and rock music, and her 25-year singing career beat a path to stardom. Together they recorded three albums and entertained people all around the world. Woo says "My greatest experience was when we toured the Far East (USO shows), especially when we penetrated deep into enemy territory in Vietnam to entertain the troops."

Costanzo and Woo earned rave reviews in Las Vegas (Sands Hotel and The Tropicana) particularly after they introduced the new, fast-rising Latin number, "La Bamba." "My partner did a lot of Latin rhythms," she recalls, "and 'La Bamba' was the only one I knew. We used to really vamp the ending up with a lot of drums and a lot of yelling 'La Bamba!'...it was always different and a lot of fun... nothing like the karaoke version."

About her transition to a different entertainment realm she says "I loved singing but it was stressful dealing with club owners and musicians...You've really have to go after it and I didn't really want it that badly." Hosting a karoke show turned out to be the perfect showcase for this former Bunny—and her fan base has mutiplied like rabbits.

Woo is known for her Fastest No-Nonsense Karaoke Rotation: "I try to start (and end) with a good song and singer [and will] alternate male and female singers and songs in certain order to make a great show. I love it when a regular asks me to pick a song for them. I know what songs they do well and it makes for a better show."

She also enforces her "Karaoke Courtesy" rule: "I hate it when I



hear 'it's only Karaoke...' That's not an excuse for bad behavior like screaming into the mic, pounding the mic, using ugly language, talking or laughing loudly while someone is singing... it's so rude and makes the singer feel like crap. I just want to tell them to SHUT UP OUT THERE. And I'll never understand how someone can get up and make a complete ass of themselves, especially after following a really good singer. I will turn off a singer's mic if nessesary. Applause is nice, but don't give false compliments."

If Woo gets too many requests for slow or fast songs she'll call up her regulars to sing something fast (or slow). And if she

gets a bad singer: "I'll just insert a good singer after them. I do a lot of juggling to the point where someone will come up and say 'Did you skip me? I was after so and so.' Some singers think that they're better than they are, and try to sing songs out of their league. It makes me cringe. I need to present the singers as a show. I use reverb on almost everyone. They like it and I love it, but if you're bad nothing helps. I do the best I can but I can't work magic."

"Most people don't know what key works best for them," Woo explains. She says it depends on the guests. "Sometimes, if they say it's too high or too low and they are nice about it, I'll stop the song and start over with a new key. I think of Saturdays as 'Show Night' and if a singer wants to try new songs or if they're an "unsure" singer, I recomend they come in on Sundays. I call Sundays 'Casual Night' or 'Rehearsal Night.'"

I asked Woo if she ever plays a non-karaoke song during her show: "Yes, sometimes when the night is really dragging with slow songs or bad singers, I'll put in the Wobble, or Electric



Slide or something to break it up. And sometimes a dance song is requested. If I don't have any dancers then I'm dead and the night really sucks. That doesn't happen very often but when it does I feel so frustrated and helpless.

Woo's most requested karaoke songs? "Pretty Woman," "I'm Never Gonna Fall in Love Again," "Brick House," "King of the Road" and "My Way."

Woo asks singers to always sign up with two selections. She says the reason for two songs is someone might have already sung it and or because one of the songs might be on her "NFG list" "My 'NFG list' consists of songs that are vulgar, offensive or over five minutes long." (I didn't ask what "NFG" means.)

Here's a sample of some of the "conversations" Woo has with singers:

"Yes, the name of the song; yes, your name with initial, you are not the only Bill or Mary in this room. Put it in the song slip box, yes the box right there. I can't read this; please write legibly; why is this print so small? No I don't know how long the wait is ...about an hour; no I can't move you up just because you're a new

singer, other KJs' do? Well, not this one...I'm sorry...I can't...nope...yes your name! Please choose another song, it's already been picked (or someone has



Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a DJ in the SoCal radio market on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands.



already sung it). No I can't let you sing it just because you think you can sing it better than the last person...no one wants to hear it again...once a night is enough. What? It's not fair? Well, I think it is...and it's my show! I NEED YOU TO STOP TALKING TO ME, I CAN'T THINK. GO AWAY!"

Haven't we all wanted to tell a guest that sometimes? **MB**

Find out more about Gerrie Woo at www.wookaraoke.com.



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Questions DJs Don't Want School Clients to Ask

By Arnolando Offermann



4 SchoolsOnly has a newsletter for school dance advisors only (yes, if we see a non-district email, we block the email). In this newsletter, we provide tips and tricks as well as savings towards homecoming/prom. With over 200 subscribed high schools in the state, I have also built myself a great soapbox to bring up important issues. One of the things I've noticed is that clients (in general, not just schools) don't do due diligence when it comes to vendors. A good example is insurance; just because you're insured doesn't mean you have the right insurance. The reaction to this article has been great. I want to share this with you because if you decide to enter the realm of mobile production, long gone are the days of being "just a DJ" and having the legal and safety requirements of "just a DJ."

If something here offends you, take a good hard look at what you're doing before you say "this Arnolando guy is just full of it."

Alas, I reveal what I have shared with my school clients:

QUESTIONS DJS DON'T WANT YOU TO ASK

Ok, so not EVERY DJ... but let's be 100% honest here; once a company is 100% legit, business costs skyrocket. This is why many of us charge what we do. Aside from delivering a stellar service, running a business isn't cheap nor easy! Then again, planning a homecoming or prom isn't much easier and trying to find the right company is tough enough as it is,

without trying to figure out what to ask while making sure you do due diligence. The list below is a small fraction of what you need to ask your production company (many DJs have evolved into this field of business) to make sure you're covered 100%. Why is this important? One word: SAFETY!

INSURANCE

Everyone has insurance, but the honest truth is that most "DJ insurance" or "production insurance" is bought online and they don't check on us as often as you'd think. I could buy a cheap \$399 DJ insurance plan that covers basic sound and lights; this insurance binder would satisfy a county's contract requirements, but if anything happened with the setup we bring out: WE WOULD NOT BE COVERED! But how? We provided proof of insurance! Well, just because someone has the insurance doesn't mean they told the insurance company what they were bringing out. Here's the tough part: Insurance binders don't explain anything nor will they ever. This is where you ask your DJ not if they have insurance, but instead ask: "What type of insurance do you have and what does it cover?"

WORKMAN'S COMP

It's hard to qualify for Workman's... TRUST US! However, if your DJ doesn't have it, you better hope there's a clause where he won't sue you if he or his employees get hurt. Why risk it? Productions like school dances are dangerous! All it takes is someone slipping on a drink on the gym floor to launch a lawsuit if they have no Workman's!

[Side note for you DJs: We know not every company qualifies for WC; we didn't for a while. Once you can, get it! Trust me, you don't want to be caught in a position that can bankrupt you!]

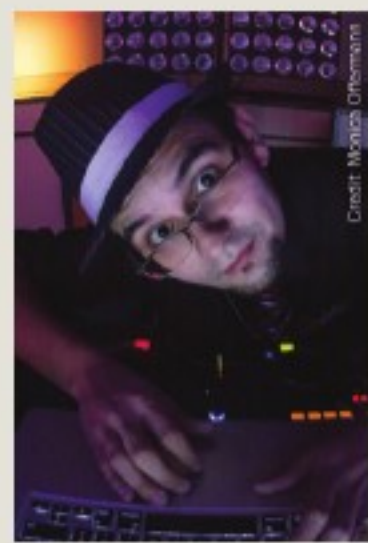
LIGHTING CONTROL

Every company says they have lights, or moving lights, intelligent fixtures, whatever the name may be. The honest truth is that most schools have ZERO idea what that light show entails. So ask! Your contact should be able to speak enthusiastically about what lighting they use, how they use it, and the effect it will create. Better yet, ask for videos of how the lighting goes along with the music and theme. No videos?—Move on. You wouldn't book a hotel ballroom without seeing it first, right?

LASERS WILL BLIND YOU!

This isn't a joke. Did you know a laser that's improperly aimed can actually hurt your vision and some can even burn flesh? This is why all legal laserists have a permit from the FDA called a Variance. By all means, DON'T be afraid of using lasers at your dance. We do laser shows ALL THE TIME with no issues. But we're also trained professionals with government papers that assure you that we don't take chances. Not all lasers require variances as not all of them will blind your crowd (very few exceptions...very few); but a laser that doesn't require a variance is one of three things: 1) a toy (meaning it won't be very visible); 2) diffracted, such as the starfield lasers that are very popular, or... 3) illegal.

Be safe! Ask your production company for a copy of its variance. Also ask about their emergency stop plan should someone get close to the beams (such as impromptu crowd surfers).



Arnoldo Offermann is the creator of the video series **Master School Dances** and author of **R U Rockin' with the Best?!** He has helped DJs worldwide become market leaders in school dances. In a soft economy flooded with \$500 school dance DJs, Arnoldo enjoys watching 4SchoolsOnly yield dances of 10-20x that price tag. Learn more about his wildly successful series packed with ideas that actually work at www.MasterSchoolDances.com.

MIXING

This is a huge debate among DJs: many argue that you don't need to mix to create a good dance. This is sort of true, but with the average high schooler watching every famous DJ with a magnifier glass, I think you'll get a unanimous decision that if a DJ can't mix, then it's going to

be tough to seamlessly jump genres and keep everyone happy. Ask your DJ for performance videos to help you decide.

CONTINUED EDUCATION

In ANY industry, education is important. Did you know there are countless seminars and videos dedicated to our industry? Conventions such as Mobile Beat Las Vegas, NAMM, LDI, InfoCOMM and a few others are geared towards enhancing what we offer! (Fun fact: The world-wide, leading school dance education seminars are hosted by 4SchoolsOnly president, Arnoldo Offermann.) Ask your entertainer how involved in the industry he is and how he continues to perfect his craft! It's not a make or break deal, but it sure helps to know that your team is committed!

[Side note for you DJs: Yup, I use my involvement in the industry and Master School Dances as a selling point to clients... and you're damn right it works! I've even had clients order my book before just to see the inside view of the industry!]

That's it for now...I'm sure we'll offer a Part 2 very soon! **MB**

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JOHN BECK

JOHN BECK PERSONALIZED WEDDING ENTERTAINMENT AUSTRALIA

I never leave the house without door wedges/stops; I've seen many DJs use their equipment as a door stop while loading in and out. Wedges look way more professional and don't take up any space in the tool box. And they're not a tripping hazard in a doorway like a road case

holding the door open.

I've also found this app useful, called Discover Music. Sometimes I get a strange request, something I've never heard of and I'm not sure what to play after it—this app finds similar artists. You just type in a name and hit search.

**MITCH TAYLOR, WED
TAYLORED WEDDINGS
ESCANABA, MI**



Here are 4 tools that help keep Taylored Weddings running smoothly.

DJ Event Planner. Man, I don't know WHAT I'd do without this great platform to run my business. From front of the house service to back of the house management, DJEP works great for our company and helps keep both my talent and clients informed about their events. I can't say enough good things about being able to pull up a past client's wedding song when

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I see them at an event and then be able to play it for them there at the wedding they're attending. It makes me look like a ROCKSTAR and has given me continued referrals. Thanks DJEP!

Trip It. I travel to different conferences and workshops that are held throughout the United States, and honestly this is probably the best \$50 I spend all year. Trip It Pro automatically gathers any itineraries sent to my email address, puts them into my Trip It app and also will update me on flight changes before my trip and gate changes on the day of, as well as when I can check in for my flights. If you travel a lot, this app is for you.

Dropbox. Taylored Weddings has a parent Dropbox folder for each year of clients events and then has folders created inside that folder for every client labeled as such ("Sue and John 060714"). We then share that folder with our couple so they can put in any photos they would like to appear on our TV screens that we bring to each event during their instant slideshow, or for specialty montages. We also use Dropbox to share our final scripts



with the talent at the event so they can retrieve it anything they wish to practice before the event.

Mile IQ. This is an app I started using this year to great success, as it just runs in the background on my phone and literally picks up miles that I drive for my business. It knows when I go from my home to my office and also on drives to events. I can go into Mile IQ and it will show me where I've driven from and to and also calculate the potential value of those miles driven. I can then also classify whether those drives were for work or personal and make it that much easier on myself, come tax time.

MIKE WALTER

ELITE ENTERTAINMENT TINTON FALLS, NJ

Microphone. My microphone is my number one tool. My voice is what sets me apart from everyone else in this industry. I can relay emotion with it and get a crowd pumped up and eloquently introduce people. And my mic is what amplifies my voice and carries it out to the masses.

My iPad. I use my iPad to read off the names for bridal party introductions and something about that still impresses people. When I'm lining up the bridesmaids and ushers I'll inevitably have someone say, "Are you using an iPad instead of a clipboard? That's so cool!" Plus I have tons of music on my iPad along with DJ apps, so if I ever had to, I could finish an event just mixing off my iPad. It wouldn't be pretty but at least I could do it.

DJ Event Planner. My staff loves it. My clients love it. And I love it. I just had a discrepancy recently where the client thought they owed a certain balance but

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DJ TOOLBOX

I knew it was more than that. I was able to pull up their information on my iPad and show them how much they owed. Plus as a business owner I can't tell you how many times I've been out of the office and have been able to solve a problem because I can look everything up online. I've re-assigned events on my iPhone while literally lying on the beach.

Comfortable Shoes. I tell everyone I hire to invest in a good pair of comfortable dress shoes. Some of my DJs work three or four events in a 48-hour time span. If you skimp on shoes, your feet will hate you and you won't be able to stand up the whole time and dance around. Do yourself a favor and get a great pair of shoes. Depending on how much you work, be prepared to replace them every year.

POOL. I love Promo Only's online service. I've been a Promo Only subscriber since the mid-'90s and when they introduced POOL I was one of the first to jump on board. You get everything you need for events and more, and you get it instantly.

My Assistant. I know a lot of DJs generally work by themselves but I love



having an assistant with me. I do almost every event with a second person. Someone to help me load in and out, someone to brainstorm programming ideas with and someone to keep me sane during the stressful moments at a party. Not to mention the fact that during the key moments of the night like bridal party introductions or cake cutting I can be on the dance floor MCing while my assistant is making the musical changes.

BRIAN SNYDER

**SNYDER ENTERTAINMENT
NASHVILLE, TN**

GoPro Camera(s). The power of video is undeniable. Our team will bring a GoPro to each wedding and capture some of the highlights. Our goal is to have a quick turn around and quality production as a small gift for our clients. One of our team members is so efficient with this process that he has clients asking for him because they have seen the videos. The online exposure is fantastic and we have received huge kudos from our previous clients.

iPod and iPad Backups. We encourage all of our team members to create a playlist for each event of those "special" or "cannot miss" songs and have them available on an iPod or iPad; for example, the First Dance, Father/Daughter Dance. We like to have those type of moments in multiple places. For the iPad, we use the dJay2 app which makes for an incredible ceremony system, and now that it allows for access to Spotify...this is an absolute game-changer for DJs.

Verizon HotSpot. I believe that we all try to be detail oriented and certainly I hope we are all preparing in advance. Regardless of preparation, there always



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needs to be a plan. I have a hot spot service available through my phone so I can connect my notebooks or mobile devices to the web while working events. We also have a mobile hot spot available to our team if we know one of our team members will be in a difficult location and WiFi may not be available. With the widespread availability of WiFi this might seem crazy, but we find it to come in handy several times throughout the year!

Chauvet Freedom Series Lights: We all have our favorite piece of gear and for me and my team it is always the wireless lights. The ease, the battery life, the wireless DMX all make our job so much easier. I recognize there are plenty of options for wireless lights out there for DJs to choose from; I have been using the Freedom Series strips since they first came out and the latest model is the next evolution in performance and affordability.

Virtual DJ Content Unlimited: This is another option that allows just about any commercially produced song to be at your fingertips through the Virtual DJ software. Content Unlimited allows you



to subscribe to audio content, karaoke content, and video content. I find this to be a great resource for remixes and additional edits to songs. WiFi is a requirement to use this feature in Virtual DJ. If you are not using this option, I would encourage you to give it a whirl. You can cancel your subscription at any time. A lot of bang for the buck in this feature.

QSC K Series Speakers and KW Subs: I am not really for sure what else I could say that would provide additional value to the K Series speakers. We have a large team and

the majority of them all choose K Series as their main speakers. All of them use the KW subs and they have been a welcome addition to our arsenal. Our team has multiple K8's for ceremony systems, K10's for those mid parties and even some K12's in our inventory for those larger venues or if we just want a little more noise!

PETER MERKLE

**CHICAGOWEDDINGDJS.COM
CHICAGO, IL**

Limbo Pole. I know what you're thinking. Crazy, right? But that collapsible limbo pole gets a lot of work. Weddings? Not so much. But any other chance I get there's a conga line into the Limbo. Here's the real reason it comes out, placed near my rig at the beginning of every set up: To remind me that there is potential for fun. There is an opportunity somewhere to create a good time. And if not; if the crowd won't go there (or anywhere near there). Then it's there to remind ME to have fun. What do you use to put your mind where you

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want it to be?

Ear Plugs. Doesn't matter if you've been DJing for 2 years or 20. Got to, got to, got to wear hearing protection. The problem is that thick, foamy, neon slugs of sponge are not what you want to be seen in. It makes you look different from your crowd, and you want to be ONE with your party. Plus they reduce the sound so much. It's just too much taken away from being in the experience. I use Earasers Musicians HiFi Earplugs. You can buy them to fit your general ear size. They attenuate, and keep you out of, the uncomfortable and harmful audio range. They don't

take all the sound out, so you can still have a conversation. Barely visible. You can still put your headphones up to your ear and hear the mix well. I highly recommend them.

Custom Insoles. Let's talk about your feet. Are you up and

around all week, and then setting up, DJing and striking on your feet all day on the weekend? So what do you do? Get the best pair of shoes you can—or pop a bunch of aspirin and pay the price? I have plantar fascitis. Everything I do needs to be geared toward keeping me on my feet. I stretch/write the alphabet with my feet before they even touch the ground in the morning. The right shoes, right socks... and the best insoles I can find. Tried them all. Then I came across these inserts that ultra-marathoner Dean Karnazes recommends. Now of course Dean says "There is magic in misery." If that were true, my

feet would freakin' be like Mickey in the Sorcerer's Apprentice. They're called SOLES. They mold to your feet after a short wear in period, or you can microwave them for a perfect fit. Your feet will thank you. Now that's magic.

DJ Software and Controller. I started on vinyl. Yeah though, not the cool kind, it was 45s. Tapes, CDs in a six pack cartridge. But then digital glory. MegaSeg, Virtual DJ, no controller. Until I moved to Serato and Pioneer. All of the above vital elements in the evolution of your mixologists journey. But turn off the "sync" and learn to mix. It's like making your bed first thing in the morning. Set yourself up right from the start.

My Tux and My Face. I'm liking my Tommy Hilfiger right now. "Dress for success." 'Nuff said. As far as my face goes, I have to remember every single second I'm talking to let it express what I want my listener to feel. Are you happy? Then why don't you tell your face? Not happy? Let your face take you there. Smile. (special shout-out to my toothbrush) **MB**

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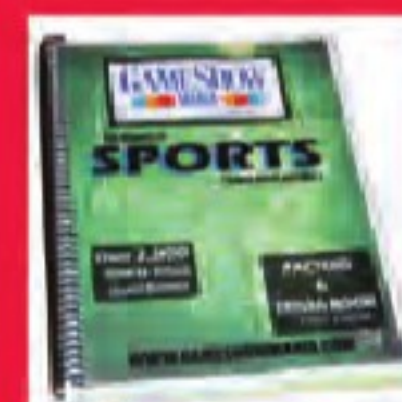
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HyperAV: Easy Way to Loose the Wires

By J Richard Roberts

Going wireless with speakers has been a goal of many DJs wanting to put their sound in other portions of a banquet hall or facility without running 100-200 feet of XLR cable to get to those back speakers. HyperAudio Visual, a regular exhibitor at Mobile Beat Las Vegas, has brought to market their solution to this issue.

The Hyper AV Wireless Transmitter and Receiver units can send approximately 100feet and operate at a 2.4 GHz radio range. We used them at a Christmas celebration where getting sound into the hallways of the community building with our source signal coming from the gym of the former school was our goal.

When there was a line of sight from the transmitter to the receiver(s) the signal was perfectly clear. The only place where we had trouble was when we were trying to go through two or three layers of concrete block with the signal; but even then, we were able to perform well, with very minor drop outs.



To use the system, you simply put the transmitter and receiver in pairing mode (just like with bluetooth devices), then after hooking up the cabling, the boxes see each other quickly. Volume adjustments can be made on the units on either side.

Overall, these are well-built units with multiple outputs and inputs (depending on whether the unit is a transmitter or receiver), and are definitely worth adding to the typical DJ company tool kit.

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Time to Go BIG with Video

THE FORZA MOBILE VIDEO WALL PROVIDES A WHOLE NEW VIEWING EXPERIENCE

By Ryan Burger

The FORZA Mobile Video Wall from Volanti Displays was developed to bring video wall technology to any venue. Whether it's a large event, trade show, convention or intimate wedding, The FORZA provides a classy, functional video option for any DJ or entertainer.

"In the past, we heard DJs say video walls were a nightmare to put up or take down," says James Henry, CEO of Volanti Displays. "With the FORZA, Volanti created a product that is mobile, easily accessible and ready to go in a matter of minutes."

This ingenious design multiplies the look of the traditional LCD or plasma TV, providing a display that is comparable to the size of portable projector/screen systems. With choice of brightness levels, the FORZA is bright enough to be in full outdoor or indoor light, and still show a

time at the event for my staff was under 10 minutes!

"The Forza Mobile Video Wall will revolutionize the way you set up a booth at your next trade show, broadcast photos or personal footage at the next wedding, and show music videos or video content in the music industry," says Michael Sarich, Business Development Manager of Volanti Displays.

DJ BradD, who was the lead DJ on the event told us "The screen was very easy to set up. The first impression that I had when it was set up was how bright and clear the screen is. The clarity of the screen is awesome when playing high definition music videos."

To sum it up best, Jake Feldman, co-owner and operating partner of BC Productions said, "While the product is for DJs who do larger (pay-wise) events, it certainly was a breeze for setup, tear-down, and transport. There is a huge opportunity with these screens to make some serious money, especially since they are able to be seen in direct sunlight or room lighting, and provide crystal clear HD viewing!"

The mobile unit has all kinds of applications for video DJs, as well as further possibilities as a high-end system for your wedding clients to show wedding videos, montages and more. It's a fantastic replacement for the



strong image at an extremely high resolution.

When Michael Sarich of Volanti Displays contacted Mobile Beat about having this hardware for review at one of our events, I was thrilled to find that we had a school dance lined up where we could give it a good workout. The client hosts dances that average 300 attendees and always spends good money entertaining the students. The school was looking for something extra to throw at the attendees this year. The FORZA hit the target dead-on.

The Mobile Video Wall consists of four 55" LCD monitors that give you a total of a 110" diagonal screen, with a fully assembled screen size of 95.5" by 102", bringing the total specs up to a full 4K display. Yes, that's four 1920x1080 Full HD screens daisy-chained together with a super-narrow bezel (2.65mm) to make it an absolutely breathtaking display. The wide viewing angle and contrast is amazing. This isn't just taking four household TV's and tying them together into a bigger screen through some funky electronics; all the hardware involved is ready for commercial use, and certainly up to the challenge of mobile DJ events.

And speaking of mobility, this is where the FORZA Mobile Video Wall really shines. It is packed in two heavy-duty wheeled road cases that transform into the base and frame. After the cases are rolled and locked into place, you simply pull a lever, and thanks to a gas spring mechanism, the LCD displays rise into place. Then you pivot the screens and hook the two mobile units together. Once the four display monitors are in place, hooking power and HDMI cabling up between the four pieces and the source splitter and control hardware is easy. Total setup



standard projector and screen systems used at many corporate events, and a great outside rental for trade shows (the original reason for this design). The impact the FORZA Mobile Video Wall would have at a bridal fair, showing videos of your DJ company (not to mention photographer or videographer demos) would be truly amazing.

This unit and others in the Volanti Displays line will be on display at Mobile Beat Las Vegas. They also offer a smaller 94" version of the same system, and an 84" single, large LCD display that is even available with multi-touch capabilities. These mobile units are really something you need to see to believe.

Check out more info at the FORZA website or call/email Michael Sarich personally at 408-579-1620 or michael.sarich@volantidisplays.com.

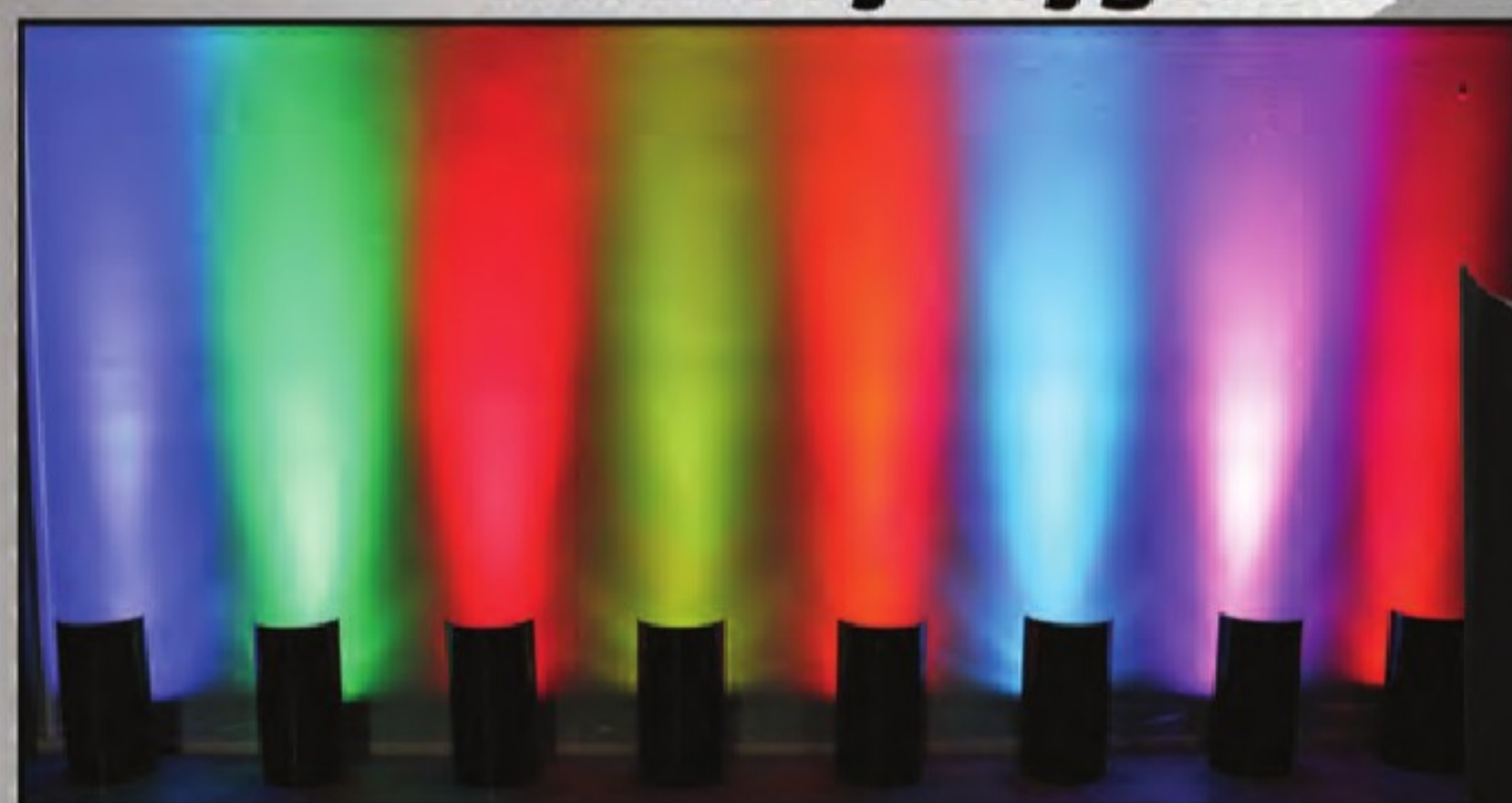
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Visikord: A New Way to Experience Music

By Marc Andrews

I'd seen Visikord software at the last few Mobile Beat Las Vegas events and wanted to try it for myself. As the company had released an update to the software since the last review in MB done by Ryan Burger, Mobile Beat's publisher (MB 152, Nov 2013), I got the go-ahead.

I decided to take it to a dance marathon event to add some extra fun interaction to the event. Understand that this not a regular DJ tool to do your gigs with; it's an interactive feature that can make a great add-on to your events. It's sort of like having a Dance Dance Revolution video game station that is much more interactive. Instead of pushing buttons, your body is in the game.

INSTALLATION

Installation of the software went well, once I got myself a new power supply for my Kinect unit. This software is based in Windows and I recommend using Windows 8.1, and having minimally at least have a Core I3 level processor. The software will take advantage of all the power you give it with additional resolution, functionality and more. I was able to run this on a Macbook computer using Apple's Bootcamp software which probably complicated setup a little, but it was a complication we were able to overcome.

Software installed, now it's time to have some fun!

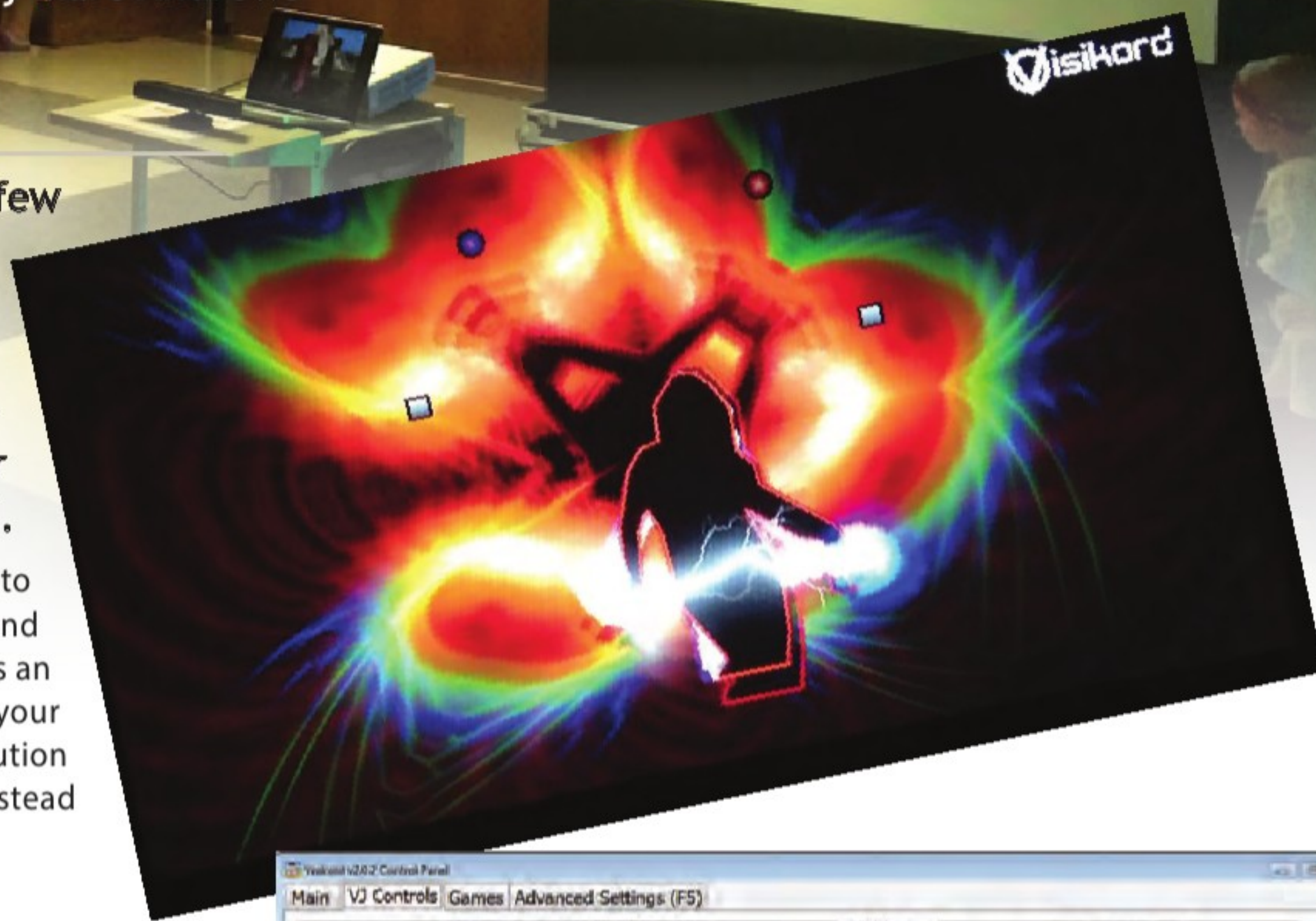
There is so much power and flexibility in the software that I found myself several times lost in the possibilities. Davor and the Visikord gang are constantly developing this product and more features will chances are be available by the time you read this review. The biggest thing I would recommend is to add a bit of a "wizard" function that will take you through wanting different features turned on and showing you the real power of it. While writing this I went back and referenced pieces off their website and saw more things I would have done had I known the power was there.

Because I was not able to man it completely during the event (because of DJing) we had some nice success with it and it is absolutely something I want to do more with at future events. It needs to its own attendant running the software for maximum impact.

While the previous version had some great functionality, the biggest thing they added to the software was the games, which add more to the experience by providing a deeper level of immersion. While I didn't take advantage of the customization features available, I can see this being a way of making the experience about the school/event you are doing.

HOW TO ADD TO YOUR BUSINESS OFFERINGS

This is an interesting sell for clients, and not something I've attempted yet. I'm not sure if it's truly something I could upsell by itself, but it



might be a nice part of the experience of a Video DJ or other higher-end package that you offer to your schools.

While the cost of a good basic laptop at around \$500, the Kinect at around \$100 and the software at \$199 (Visikord Advanced version), it is not out of line with the cost of an expanded light show. You still need to provide large format TVs or LCD projection with a screen. Thus, the total cost of a setup, when tied with your main DJ sound system is up around \$1,500.

SOMETHING TO TRY

There are trial versions you can install and I recommend reading the documentation and other instructionals before rolling out to a live gig. Also, the last two years Visikord has been at MBLV, and I would recommend you check it out in person and learn about it directly from Davor, the mastermid of the software. **MB**

www.visikord.com

To the Power of 10

AUDIO-TECHNICA'S SYSTEM 10

By Jake Feldman

Digital wireless microphones have come a long way since first being introduced a few years ago. With its new series, the System 10, Audio-Technica sees those changes and raises them a few other features that are great for DJs.

THE SYSTEM

System 10 technically is indeed a system, with different options for different applications. You can purchase a body pack-style transmitter (ATW-T1001) and either lavalier or headset-style mic units. However, in my configuration, I opted to review the workhorse of the bunch: the ATW-T1002 handheld dynamic wireless mic with the ATW-R1100 receiver, which is the core of any configuration.

I'm sure some of you share my problems at weddings. One issue I always seem to have is that those members of the wedding party that may be giving toasts, or even the VIP present who is giving the blessing, all think it might be helpful of them to turn the mic off for me. In that case, I must wait for the mic to run through its two-second mute warm-up function—a sure annoyance. With the ATW-T1002 (and most Audio-Technica products, for that matter), this is harder to achieve for a non-techy person, as the logo on the bottom of the mic is actually the on/off-mute button. This makes me happy, and avoids awkward silences or fumbling with the mic.

Most importantly with the System 10, however, is the note that the system transmits in the 2.4 GHz range, which, unlike lower bands, is relatively safe from being sold off, as it's the same band that Wi-Fi transmits in. And, for those of you that say that 2.4 is a "cloudy" frequency, the engineers that designed the System 10 included Audio-Technica's Frequency Diversity technology that transmits the signal on two channels, meaning that if there is interference, the remaining clear signal will seamlessly "take over"—meaning very few "drop outs" for those important functions.

DESIGN

A-T intended for the System-10 to be portable, meaning it's not configured for rack-mounting straight out of the box; however you can purchase shelving kits to allow for a "live-in" situation in your rack. It is, however, designed to be stackable with other ATW-R1100 receivers, making valuable table space available when performing large events or events



needing more than one mic. Even handier, when faced with that situation, is the digital readout reminding the user which mic is on which digital channel.

MY TAKE

I used the System 10 for a variety of functions, including weddings, a community festival, and as the MC mic for a band/variety concert. In my experiences, the minimal weight of the handheld transmitter was refreshing, considering my current wireless units seem to be weighted down with rocks. The pick-up pattern and range was also quite good; meaning I didn't have to have the mic one or two inches from my mouth when I spoke, and for special guests and toasters that were weak-voiced, it picked them up without feedback when turning up the volume just a tad.

I would recommend this system for anyone wanting to go digital, as the technology and the price are right in the ballpark for working DJ wallets. Even those DJs who do more than DJ, if you haven't looked at Audio-Technica and the System 10 yet—you need to. **MB**

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One Gig, Two Sets of Speakers

YAMAHA DBR12 AND ALTO TX15, SIDE-BY-SIDE

By Marc Andrews

With the opportunity of a small format, laid-back Dance Marathon for the local school at hand, I decided I would do something different during one of the hourly breaks in the action: change out my speakers and try two different sets of powered speakers during the same event. They were the Yamaha DBR12 12" and the Alto Professional TX15 15".



The goal was to serve approximately 80 students in a high school cafeteria. They were mounted up on Frankenstand tripods at mid height and neither of them were using a subwoofer. Of each hour, approximately 40 minutes

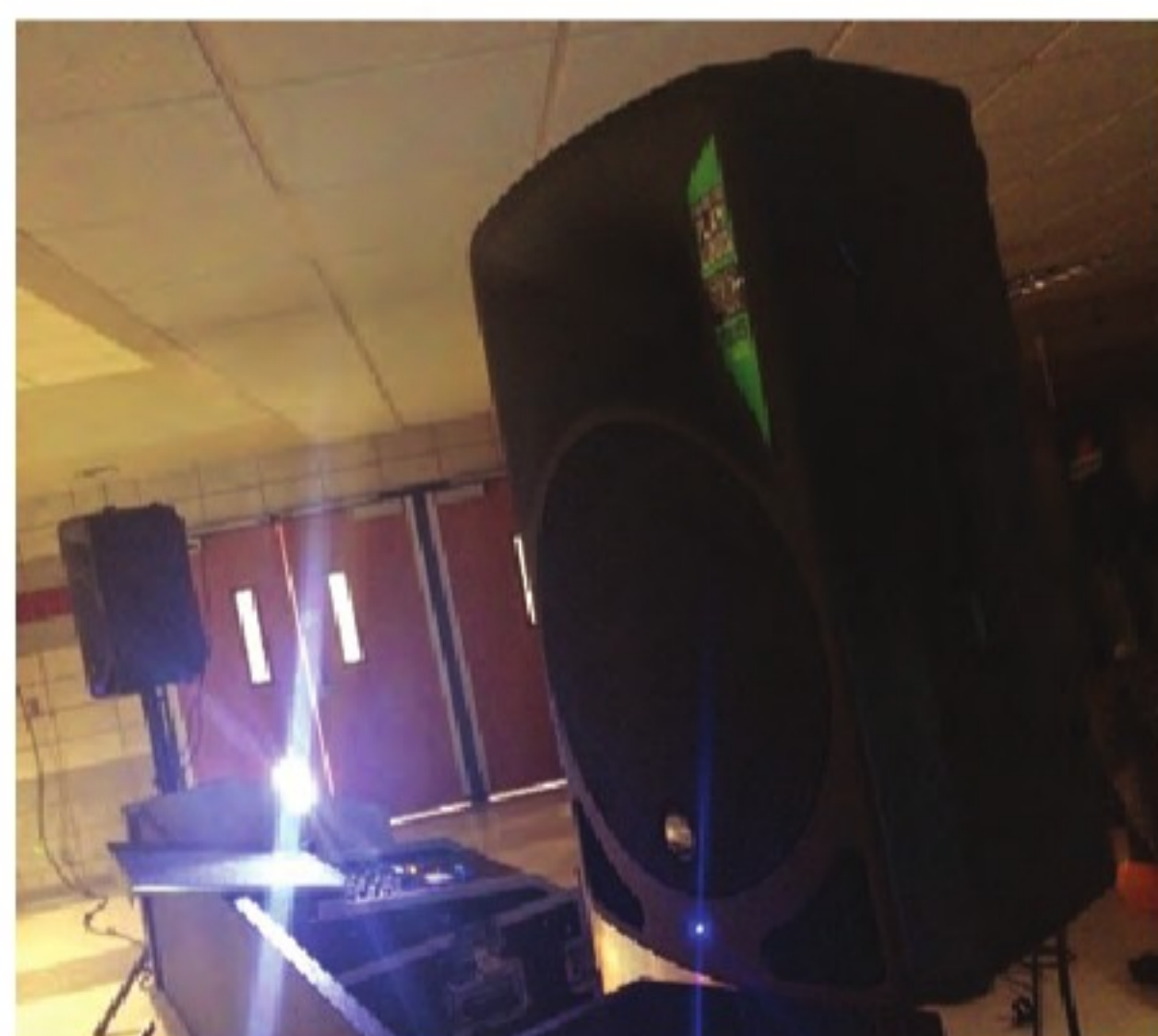
of dancing, 15 minutes of other activities and 5 minutes of chill time. A Yamaha was also later used in another room, as I will explain later.

YAMAHA DBR12

While I was apprehensive about bringing a 12" set of speakers to such an event, the Yamaha reputation encouraged me, and it proved not to be a problem.

The Yamaha is a molded cabinet with a two-way, bi-amped powered speaker. The amplifier contained in the unit puts out 1000 watts in total, with 800 going to the low frequency and 200 going to the high frequency drivers.

One of the great things I found about this cabinet is it's weight. At under 35 pounds, it was very easy to move around. Yamaha has also broken into a new price range with these powered speakers, going below \$500 for the DBR12s. The previous DXR series was about \$200 more expensive. The sound was crisp and clear and we had a great 2 hours of dancing powered by Yamaha.



ALTO TX15

Also a very light-weight speaker the Alto TX15s weigh in at around 33 lbs and are a little bigger than the Yamahas. Once in place I turned these up nicely and they performed well. The TX Series is a step down from the Black Series reviewed in Mobile Beat earlier in the year, not having a built-in mixer built. They also cost significantly less than the Black Series.



While I had to push the speakers a little bit for the event, hitting the peak lights every once in a while, I was very pleased with the performance of the speakers. I did find myself wanting a sub to go with them. I'm a fan of matching the brand and series of sub and top speakers,

but Alto has not yet added a sub to the TX line.

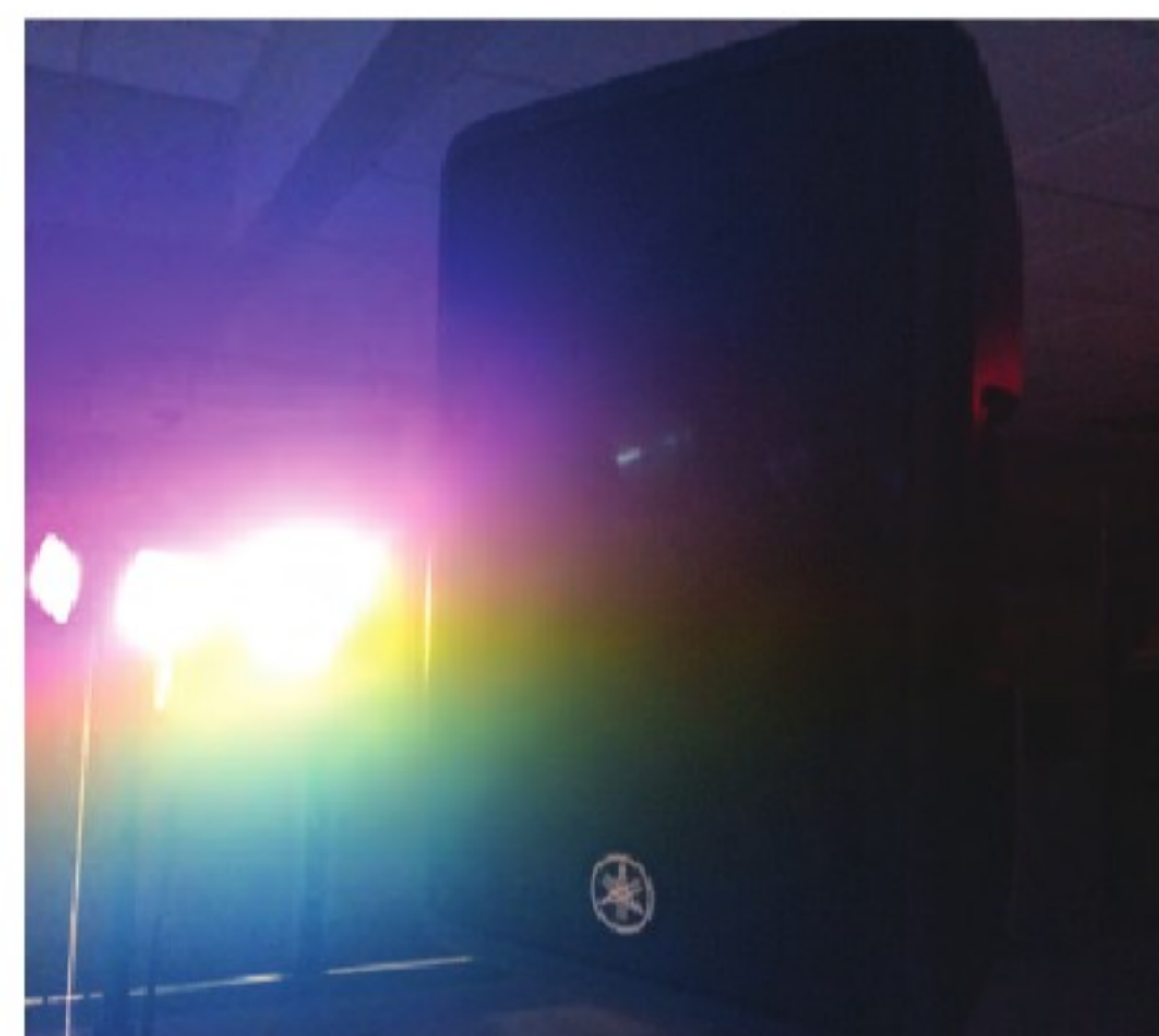
Bottom line is that the TXs provide a great, inexpensive set of speakers for a DJ getting a first set or adding to inventory.

YAMAHA BONUS

Once I had set up the Altos up in the main room, I checked around to see if there was anything else I could help with and noticed that in another room, as part of the other activities for the students, they had a Nintendo Wii setup and were using the built-in speaker to the projector for sound. Since the Yamaha has a small mixer, and because I was finished using it for the other activities, I was easily able to hook it up for them to have some real sound for the Nintendo Wii station playing Rockband.

OVERALL

These were two different sets of speakers that both served my needs well. The Yamaha DBR12 has a performance edge on the Alto TX15, but the Alto has a distinct price advantage. Either of these speakers would find a home in my DJ company's inventory to fill a different niche. **MB**



http://usa.yamaha.com/products/live_sound/speakers/active_speakers/dbr/ • www.altoproaudio.com

Enjoy a Good Thumping

MACKIE THUMPS CONTINUE AN IMPACTFUL POWERED SPEAKER TRADITION

By Marc Andrews



tions and several smaller teen events...and found that the sound with two Mackie Thump15 speakers was plenty for the audiences and venues. A nice clear sound with clear highs and deep bass that, again, you wouldn't expect out of such a low priced speaker. When you do reach beyond the 200-person mark, I would recommend adding the Thump 18S sub or some backfill speakers, possibly, two Thump15 upfront by the DJ stand and two Thump12 half-way back in the room.

LIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPION

What continues to amaze me every time I take these speakers out (and impressed me especially when packing up for this weekend's gigs) is how light they are. Weighing in at 33.2 lbs, the Thump15 is just under 8 pounds lighter than the other active speakers that I use regularly for weddings and smaller school dances.

Overall, for the DJ getting their first set of powered speakers, or simply if you are looking for some strong response from lightweight speakers, the Mackie Thump15s are worth considering. **MB**

<http://thump.mackie.com>

Mackie has long been known as one of the first manufacturers to offer powered speakers for DJs. Now they have at least three offerings that DJs can successfully use for system sound: the DLM series, covered by Robert Lindquist in the January 2014 issue of *Mobile Beat*, the SRM series, reviewed by J Richard Roberts in our July issue, and the least expensive series, the Mackie Thumps covered here.

PLENTY OF THUMP FOR THE MONEY

With a price point of just under \$300 each for the 12" Mackie Thump12 and just under \$350 each for the 15" Mackie Thump15 that I'm reviewing here, these are well-priced powered speakers in the "affordable quality" category.

Made of light but rugged polypropylene (ie, plastic), each Thump15 packs a punchy Class-D amp, crossover, high-end compression driver and the either 12" or 15" high-output woofer.

Let's get right to the sound. For the weight and the price, the amp is able to push through an amazing amount of low end through that woofer, giving you a sound that you usually don't see in speakers under \$400. While there isn't as much functionality on the back panel as on the SRMs or the DLMs, it has basic settings with a "Suggested Diagram" imprinted right on the back for the four primary applications of PA, Monitor, DJ or Speech.

I rolled the Thump15s out to three different wedding recep-

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Mobilizing Fun, Right on Cue

CUE COMMAND FROM DECEPTIVELY SIMPLE

By Ryan Burger

The Cue Command from Deceptively Simple is a great tool to have when doing wedding reception grand entrances, *Name That Tune*-style game shows and other mobile event productions. It is an integrated system including an app for an iOS device, Apple-approved hardware, and a remote control that gives you control over your music away from your DJ or sound reinforcement rig.

The remote control fits in your hand or pocket and allows you to control advancing tracks through a hard cut or fading into the next one in the playlist, as well as overall volume. The screen of the device also shows the current song name or track number that is set and cued or playing.

AT THE WEDDING RECEPTION

Cue Command is not meant to be your main DJ controller, or a controller for your other iOS DJ software applications. Rather, it is specialty device that provides a kind of digital "assistant" when



you are doing your grand entrances or other introductions that are timed with music. For example it would aid a mobile DJ who can't bring someone to help with music cues when the MC duties call him or her across the room. By loading up the tracks into the Cue Command software and having the system hooked up to your DJ rig through the 18" auto port on the back, you can have control over your cues (thus the system's name). The manufacturer boasts a 100-plus-yard range; I only needed 100 feet myself, but it was completely reliable within that range.

COMMANDING TRIVIA

Trivia is where I had a lot of fun with the Cue Command. As dinner-time entertainment before a Christmas party, we played *Name That Tune* around the room, and it allowed me to mix with the people and get them comfortable with playing the game. Doing this for a few minutes before each of the formal rounds made everything run much more smoothly when we got people up on stage.

For the main game show, we played a mix of *Name That Tune* and "Name That Person." The latter was involved each person writing down something interesting about themselves that most people wouldn't know and putting it into a hat when they picked up their name tags. We brought the teams up to our On The Spot station from Game Show Mania (could also be used with a Faceoff or similar hardware). We let the team who had missed the previous question pick the next category from Tune or Person. If it was Tune, we played approximately 20 seconds from the song and waited for someone to buzz in. When they buzzed in, we used the Cue Command to pause the track and asked them if they knew the answer, if they didn't, we used the Cue Command to play the track again in its entirety for the other team.

The first team to get to 9 correct answers, or 90 on the On the Spot scoring unit, was the winner of the round. After two rounds, we took the winners from each and had them battle for the trophy that the client had provided.

Overall, it was a fun game that could have been done with just a DJ program; but it wouldn't have had the interactivity or ease of use and preparation that the Cue Command provided for us.

To learn more, watch the video at the creator's website, or check out the Cue Command in person at MBLV this February. **MB**



www.deceptivelysimple.com

Tuning Up

ALAN BERG'S ESSENTIALS CAN HELP POLISH YOUR WEDDING BUSINESS

By Ryan Burger

Alan Berg is an industry professional who has become known for consulting with DJs and other wedding professionals through vehicles like Wedding MBA, The Knot and Wedding Wire. Though not a DJ, he understands much of what entertainers are facing in their marketing and sales, and has some helpful ideas for improving their overall wedding business approach.

I had the opportunity to hear Alan via his DVD set called *The Essentials Collection*. The seminars were recorded live at Wedding MBA and other venues where the speaker has presented over the last few years. It's timeless material, and with an easy-to-listen-to conversational style, he expresses it clearly for anyone to understand.



The presentation I was most interested in was "5 Things You Wish You Knew Before You Made Your Website," because of my previous experiences with wedding industry-related web hosting and site-building. The biggest takeaway for me was his idea of viewing your website as "an expanded elevator pitch," making sure to hit on what is truly different about your company as compared with someone else—your Unique Selling

Proposition or USP. Another powerful idea, which had me talking to other wedding industry members about it afterwards, was that "getting them to your site isn't the goal...getting them *through* the site is your goal....getting them to contact you!"

The last seminar in the collection, "Make Them Love You," has quite a powerful message, one that will be a true reality check for many DJs who hear it. According to Alan, in the wedding services industry, "Exceeding their expectations is the only possible outcome that is acceptable." In other words, being unacceptable, or even just good enough, isn't an outcome that should be the mobile entertainer's goal. For example, he expresses that good customer service sounds like someone smiling, and someone who isn't reading their email at the same time.

The seminars are available as MP3 downloads or MP3 CDs for \$149.95 or as DVDs for \$299.95. **MB**

www.alanberg.com

The Essentials Collection

5 Things You Wish You Knew Before You Made Your Website

(how to fix them)

Bride's Buyings Signals

(how close more sales)

Angry Brides

(protecting your online reputation)

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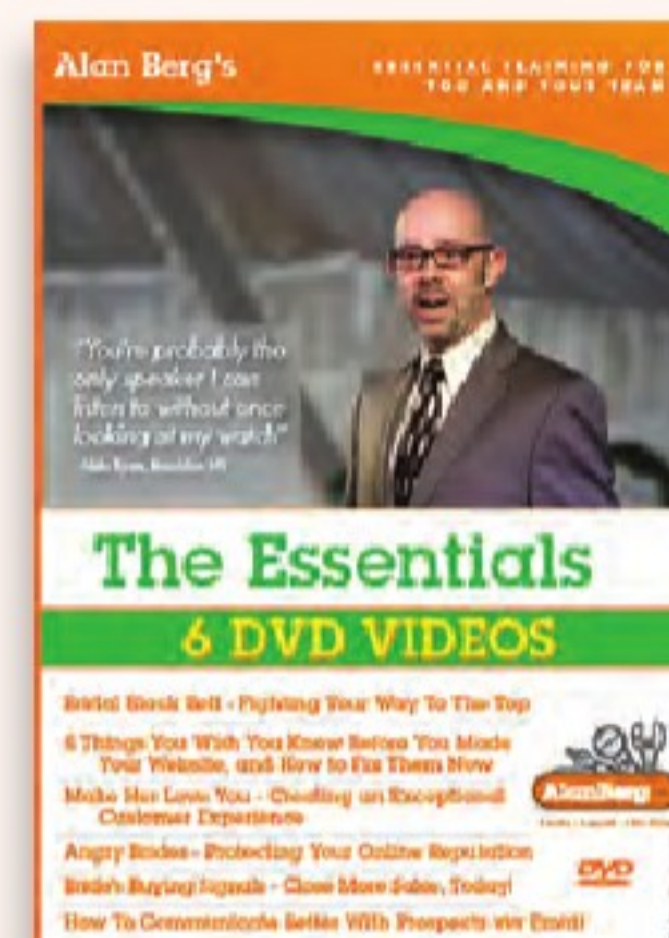
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No Reply at All?

FOUR LAWS FOR GETTING PROSPECTS TO RESPOND

By Stephanie Padovani

If you're frustrated with brides and grooms who don't respond, even when they've contacted you first, let me introduce you to Law of marketing to Millennial couples.

In order to reach them, you have to do it on their terms. Millennials don't answer the phone unless they recognize the number. They don't listen to voicemail and seldom leave messages, and your chance of getting an email through is slim at best.

Check out these eye-opening statistics:

- 88% of Millennials (those under age 35) use text messaging, and 3% sleep with their phones. *Accredited Online College*
- Only 11-26% of email get opened. *Epsilon Research*
- 85% prefer text messages to voicemail. *Research Now*

The nature of communication is changing, and if you want to get a response from today's brides and grooms, you're going to have to change, too.

Law #1: Respond with their preferred medium of communication, and then some.

DJs report that over 80% of their leads come in via email. When you get a list of bridal show leads, you're typically staring at a list of email addresses. Yet we know that very few of them are opened.

The old rule is to respond to the lead by the method they used to contact you. They email you, you email them back. However, that's no longer enough to penetrate the messaging domain of the Millennial.

Get the mobile phone number. When you speak to someone, ask if you can text them the information they've requested.



Stephanie Padovani and her husband, Jeff, are the dynamic husband-wife duo behind Book More Brides, the #1 marketing resource for the wedding industry. Visit BookMoreBrides.com/priceshopper to learn "How to Position Yourself as a Valued Wedding Expert in Only Five Minutes."

Collect this number with the contact form on your website.

Don't neglect snail mail. If you have the bride or groom's mailing address, send them a postcard with a special offer. I know, no one uses mail anymore, and that's exactly the point. There's much less competition in the physical mail box.

Stalk them with Facebook custom audiences. Last year Facebook Ads introduced a new feature called a "custom audience." This allows you to upload a list of email addresses or use conversion pixel tracking to target ads just for the people on the bridal show lead list, or visitors to your website. It's the perfect way to follow your hottest leads online for the repeated exposure necessary to get a response.

I'll focus on email response through the rest of this article since that's the most common way leads come in, but know that the same principles hold true for getting a response via text, voicemail or direct mail.

Law #2: Pique their curiosity to get your message opened.

If you're responding via email, your first task is getting them to open it. The bride or groom looks at these things to determine whether to open or delete: the from address, sender name and email subject line. Your from address should display the name of a real person (bob@bobsdj.com not sales@bobsdj.com) and use that subject line to get attention and arouse curiosity.

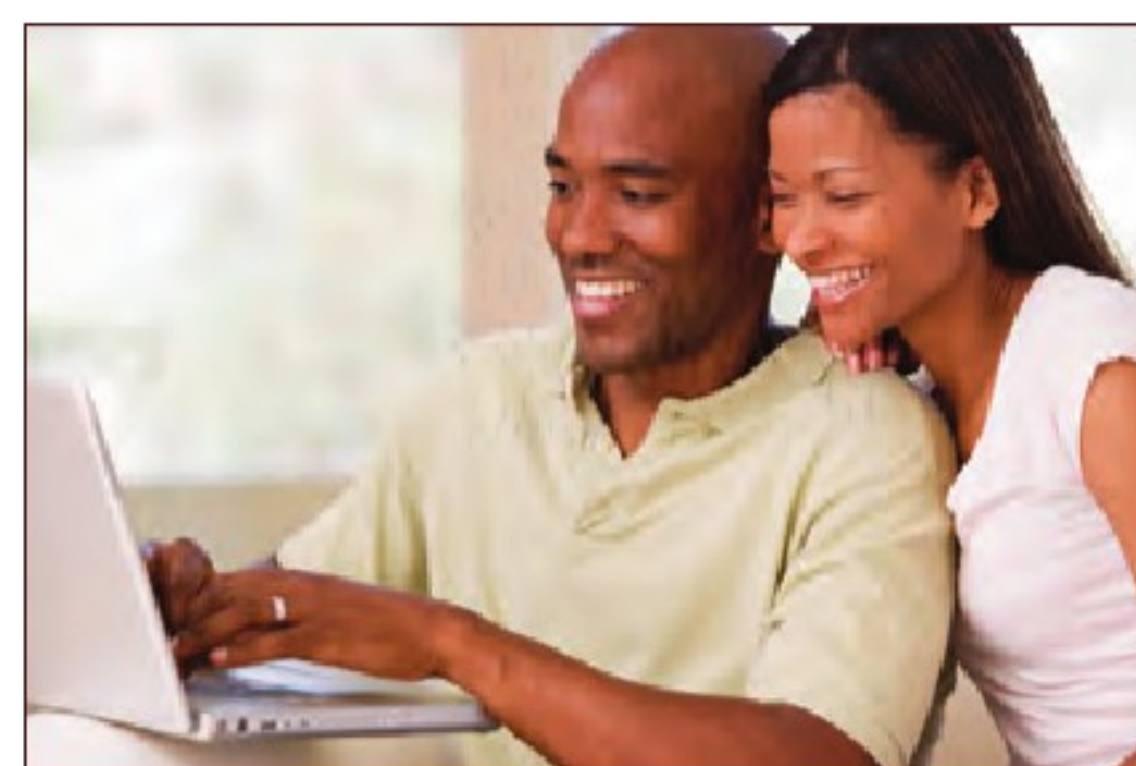
A few email subject lines to test:

Include the couple's names and wedding date. Nothing gets attention better than their favorite words and new favorite day of the year.

Add some mystery. An email with a subject like, "This mistake cost one bride 10k" or "I can't believe what happened at this wedding!" gets opened.

Use humor. One subject line that got me: "Steph, I think we were separated at birth!"

Whatever you do, be different, and make sure that the content of your response follows through with the promise of the subject. If you talk about a \$10,000 wedding mistake, you better dish the details inside your email.



Law #3: Make a compelling limited-time offer.

Most DJs respond to a lead like this, "If you'd like to learn more about our services, please call me for a free consultation..."

No, no, no! Don't ask them "if they'd like to," begging for their attention like it's an inconvenience. Don't offer a "free consultation," a term everyone knows is a euphemism for a sales pitch. Command their attention by telling them exactly what to do and giving them a good reason to do it.

What can you offer them of value? It might be a free coffee at Starbucks, a free Wedding Music Personality Quiz, or even a gift certificate to pay for their gas coming to the meeting. Bribe them if you have to, but offer them something that deserves a response.

Include a deadline that's no more than 72 hours away. If your offer is always available, they'll put off a response and forget about it. Make your response urgent.

Law #4: Respond a minimum five times using different mediums.

Marketing and sales studies tell us that it takes anywhere from 5-12 contacts with a business before a prospect becomes a customer. Add that to the fact that most of your emails are not getting opened, and your chances of getting a response are abysmal without relentless follow up.

Relentless follow up doesn't have to be annoying. Include helpful tips and resources in your follow up, use a personal tone and humor, and your message will be welcomed.

Following up with the multiple mediums mentioned in Law #1 has a cumulative effect. The email you sent after your cheerful voicemail message on top of the ad they see in their Facebook newsfeed...it all adds up to a message from the universe that they must call you now.

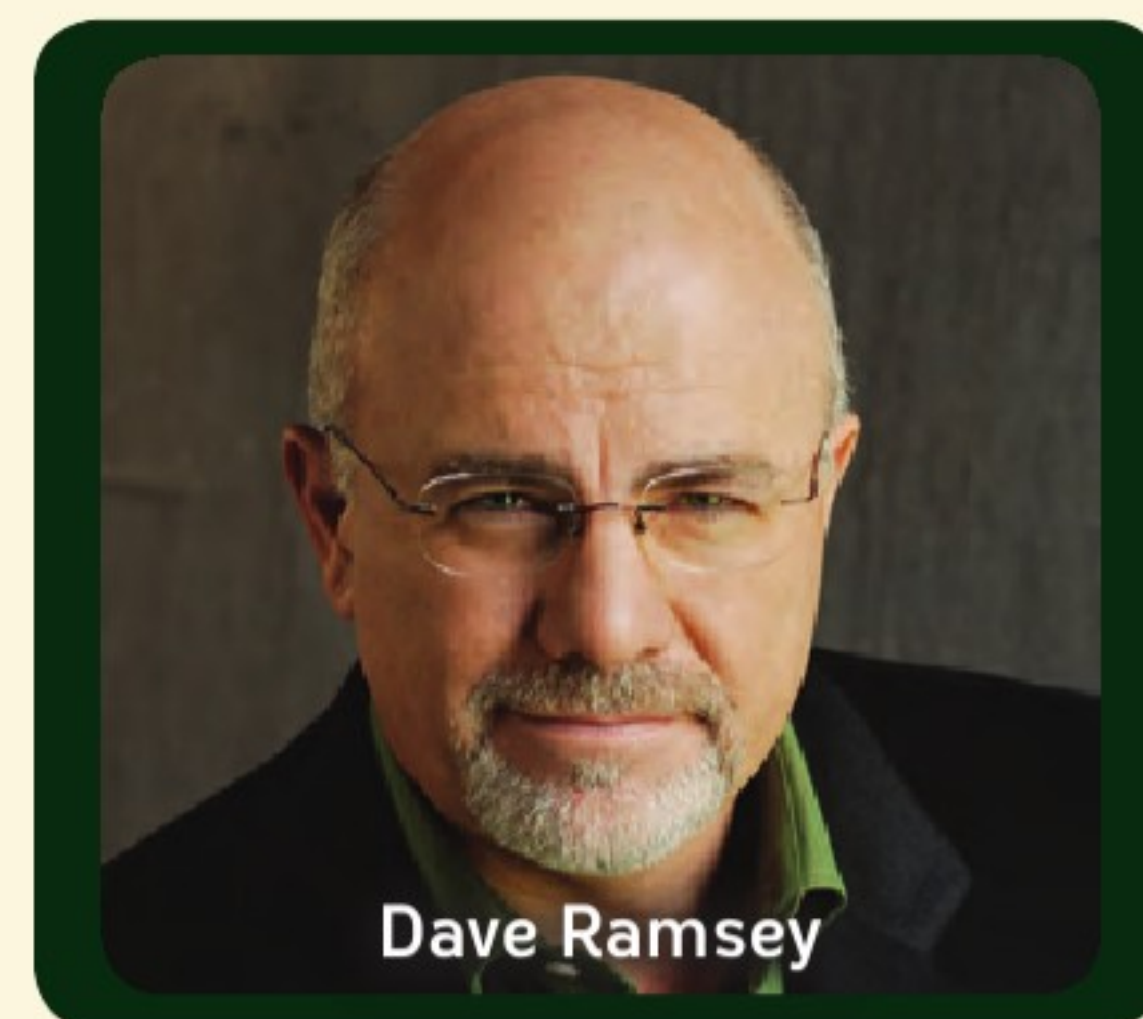
Getting a response from today's busy brides and groom's isn't rocket science, but you can't do it by using the same old methods that aren't working for you right now. Get with the program, freshen up your message and your marketing mediums by putting these laws into action, and watch for that response. **MB**

Four Ways to Fight the Fear of Failure

Running a business can be scary. You put your heart and soul into your company and can't imagine doing anything else. Then you realize that no matter how successful you are, you might be just a few bad decisions away from losing your dream and disappointing your team.

Luckily, it doesn't have to be this way. As best-selling author Dave Ramsey teaches in *EntreLeadership* Master Series, fear paralyzed his decision-making ability until he came up with a system. In fact, one of the core values of his company today is that decisions are never made based on fear.

So how can you conquer your fear of failing?



Dave Ramsey



FACE YOUR FEAR

What's the easiest way to get over your fear of failure? Own up to it. Realize that you're likely to stumble many times before you achieve success. You're going to mess up at some point, and that's okay. Henry Ford, Bill Gates and even Thomas Edison all screwed up numerous times before they hit it big. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, "You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face."

CONSIDER THE AWFUL TRUTH

When considering new projects or options for your company, always take into account a worst case scenario. Will you be able to survive if your new idea falls apart? When the answer is yes, the decision is no longer so frightening. "Once I know I'm not going to die from making this call—even if I'm wrong—it releases me to make the call," Ramsey says.

TALK IT UP

Remember when you faced something scary as a kid? It was always better to have a friend by your side. The same holds true for adults. Find a business mentor who has been through tough times, and discuss your biggest business fears with them. Once those concerns are out in the open, you'll find they are much more manageable.

MAKE A CONTINGENCY PLAN

Having several options is one of the easiest ways to rid yourself of fear. Use a number of vendors, for example, so you are not

relying on just one. Then, if something goes wrong you already have a back-up plan. As Ramsey says, options give you power and remove fear.

Fear will always be part of owning your own business, whether it's being scared of losing customers or revenue, or even being sued. They're all legitimate concerns. But it's how you handle them that makes the difference between success and failure. "It is wise to recognize that those fears may be well founded, and we should not ignore the potential consequences of our decision," Ramsey says. "But we will not allow the spirit of fear to drive us." **MB**

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*Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He has authored four New York Times best-selling books, including *EntreLeadership* and *The Total Money Makeover*. The **Dave Ramsey Show** is heard by more than 8 million listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com.*

Tracking the Trends, Revisited

STAYING ON TOP OF TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS FACTORS IN MOBILE ENTERTAINMENT

By John Stiernberg

In the December 2013 issue of *Mobile Beat*, we looked at the social and cultural trends that had an impact on the mobile entertainment business in 2014. Now let's add technology and business trends to the mix and see how they may affect our industry in 2015 and beyond.

Are you tracking developments in DJ technology? How about the economy and financial world? Which market forces are drivers and which are constraints to your business growth? This article addresses these issues and recommends three action tips for success.

NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR MOBILE ENTERTAINERS

There are three environments where technology is changing how DJs and mobile entertainers work: 1) on stage, 2) in the studio, and 3) in the office. Here are key examples:

- Sounds systems are becoming lighter and more powerful for the money. Remember those giant amps and speakers from the 20th century? They've been replaced by great-sounding and versatile powered speakers.
- Reliable wireless transmission from your mixer or computer to the speakers means no wires to connect or trip over.
- Your sound/lights/effects system is a "network" that can be controlled via apps on your smartphone or tablet.
- Lighting controllers are being integrated into audio mixers for the corporate AV and church market.
- LED lighting systems are more affordable and are being installed in clubs, churches, and corporate venues as well as being used portable lighting rigs.



- Unified communication technologies, including Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), allow you to stay in touch with your team, office, and clients via voice, text, e-mail and social media—all from your phone, at affordable prices.

Trend to watch: Who will offer the first DJ controller that includes lighting and special effect control as well as video recording capability and live streaming?

BUSINESS ISSUES FOR MOBILE ENTERTAINERS

The enabling technology can either help or hurt the DJ business. Which way it goes depends on a combination of factors including your market focus, positioning vs. competitors, and stage of readiness. Here are examples of both drivers (growth factors) and constraints (risk factors).

DJ Market Drivers

- Driven in part by electronic dance music (EDM), the DJ market is growing as a popular entertainment option and is becoming more legitimate in the eyes of the music industry, in addition to the public (of course we've always known that). Performing DJs continue to gain celebrity status and have become established marquee attractions at clubs, festivals, and special events.
- Proliferation of digital media and digital gear over the past ten years has created new paradigms for acquiring, managing, manipulating, and performing the music. Remember when you had to cart around those crates of records and hope you could handle requests? Things have changed for the better.
- With the global economy improving, the general public and corporate meeting planners alike have more discretionary cash for entertainment, both DJ and live acts.

DJ Market Constraints

- Ease of use and accessibility of entry-level gear—including the use of mobile phones and tablets as quasi-controllers—creates increased participation in DJing. There are more bedroom and garage DJs trying to compete for gigs than ever before.
- The market is very "fashion driven" and fickle. A particular style of music or event format can be wildly popular one month only to be eclipsed by a new or different type



John Stiernberg is founder and principal consultant with Stiernberg Consulting (www.stiernberg.com). John has over 25 years experience in the music and entertainment technology field. He currently works with audio and music companies and others on strategic planning and market development. His book *Succeeding In Music: Business Chops for Performers and Songwriters* is published by Hal Leonard Books. Contact John via e-mail at john@stiernberg.com, or on LinkedIn and Facebook. Follow him at <http://twitter.com/JohnStiernberg>.

the next month. Unless you specialize in a specific age group or type of gig, it is increasingly difficult to stay edgy and current.

- Despite the improving economy, clients and promoters often plead poverty and keep talent and production budgets low. Some of this is driven by the proliferation of new DJs, but competition also comes from caterers, videographers, or other event costs.

PAYING ATTENTION IS A COMPETITIVE NECESSITY!

It's easy to get in a rut or be in denial about changes in technology or market conditions. The risks and threats of not paying attention include losing gigs, spending more than you need to on gear, and losing your edge in terms of buzz in the market. On the other hand, it's not that hard to keep in touch with the trends. This enables you to make decisions that effectively drive your business and enhance your competitive position. Here are three suggestions for setting up an early warning system.

Action Tip 1: Identify the categories of market information that have the most impact (positive or negative) on your mobile entertainment business. We've highlighted technology and business here. Other critical areas include your local economy, music and entertainment news, financial and lending criteria, legal or regulatory issues that have an impact (such as FCC allocation of wireless spectrum).

Action Tip 2: Organize and set up a place to store market

data in your office. I suggest that you allow for both digital files (e.g. a market intelligence folder on your hard drive) and analog or physical media (like magazines, books, catalogs, etc.). Really simple tip: Create three separate "folders" (digital and analog) for 1) gear and technology trends, 2) financial and economic trends, and 3) music and entertainment trends.

Action Tip 3: Involve your team. Ask your accountant to keep you posted on tax and interest rate changes. Develop a relationship with a DJ-specialty gear supplier that can provide current information on technology and product trends. Network with other mobile entertainers to help stay on top of the latest music and event programming trends. You get the idea.

HERE'S THE POINT...

The ability to track the trends is a competitive weapon. While the general media and trade publications cover much of what you need to know, you still need to pay attention and make decisions in a pro-active and systematic way. Some of your competitors may lag instead of lead, but you can't assume that they are ignoring the changing dynamics of mobile entertainment.

Be sure to implement the Action Tips in sequence: 1) target the categories of trends to track, 2) organize your market database for easy access, and 3) make it a team effort.

Next issue we'll forecast the changes in client buying criteria and show how that has an impact on your promotion as well as your playlists. In the meantime, best wishes for big success in 2015! **MB**



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What's YOUR Excuse?

“IF”—A CLASSIC LIST, PRESENTED FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION...

By Napoleon Hill, via Jeffrey Gitomer

There are lots of excuses for no success, but very few reasons. People who do not succeed have one distinguishing trait in common. They know all the reasons for failure, and have what they believe to be air-tight alibis to explain away their own lack of achievement.

Some of these alibis are clever, and a few of them are justifiable by the facts. But alibis cannot be used for money. The world wants to know only one thing—HAVE YOU ACHIEVED SUCCESS?

A character analyst compiled a list of the most commonly used alibis. As you read the list, examine yourself carefully, and determine how many of these alibis, if any, are your own property. Remember, too, the philosophy presented in this book makes every one of these alibis obsolete.

IF I didn't have a wife and family ...
 IF I had enough "pull" ...
 IF I had money ...
 IF I had a good education ...
 IF I could get a job ...
 IF I had good health ...
 IF I only had time ...
 IF times were better ...
 IF other people understood me ...
 IF conditions around me were only different ...
 IF I could live my life over again ...
 IF I did not fear what "THEY" would say ...
 IF I had been given a chance ...
 IF I now had a chance ...
 IF other people didn't "have it in for me" ...
 IF nothing happens to stop me ...
 IF I were only younger ...
 IF I could only do what I want ...
 IF I had been born rich ...
 IF I could meet "the right people" ...
 IF I had the talent that some people have ...
 IF I dared assert myself ...
 IF I only had embraced past opportunities ...
 IF people didn't get on my nerves ...
 IF I didn't have to keep house and look after the children ...

IF I could save some money ...
 IF the boss only appreciated me ...
 IF I only had somebody to help me ...
 IF my family understood me ...
 IF I lived in a big city ...
 IF I could just get started ...
 IF I were only free ...
 IF I had the personality of some people ...
 IF I were not so fat ...
 IF my talents were known ...
 IF I could just get a "break" ...
 IF I could only get out of debt ...
 IF I hadn't failed ...
 IF I only knew how ...
 IF everybody didn't oppose me ...
 IF I didn't have so many worries ...
 IF I could marry the right person ...
 IF people weren't so dumb ...
 IF my family were not so extravagant ...
 IF I were sure of myself ...
 IF luck were not against me ...
 IF I had not been born under the wrong star ...
 IF it were not true that "what is to be will be" ...
 IF I did not have to work so hard ...
 IF I hadn't lost my money ...
 IF I lived in a different neighborhood ...
 IF I didn't have a "past" ...
 IF I only had a business of my own ...
 IF other people would only listen to me ...

IF—and this is the greatest of them all—I had the courage to see myself as I really am, I would find out what is wrong with me, and correct it, then I might have a chance to profit by my mistakes and learn something from the experience of others.

For I know that there is something **WRONG** with me, or I would now be where I **WOULD HAVE BEEN** IF I had spent more time analyzing my weaknesses, and less time building alibis to cover them.

This piece was written in 1937 by Napoleon Hill in his immortal book, "Think and Grow Rich." This could have been written yesterday and been almost as current. The word "alibi" has been replaced by the word "excuse" but the meanings remain the same.

What's your excuse for not achieving more, and how can you turn that excuse into positive action? Just a thought. **MB**

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Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of twelve best-selling books, including **The Sales Bible** and **The Little Red Book of Selling**, **The Little Gold Book of Yes!** His new book, **21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling** is now available as a book and an online course at www.gitomervt.com. For public event dates and info on training and seminars visit www.gitomer.com or email Jeffrey at salesman@gitomer.com.

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It's People

REVELATION: GOING MULTI-OP IS GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY

By Jason Weldon



All through my 20's I thought of myself as DJ. I was a guy who owned a business and thought that getting jobs and making my company grow was the number one goal.

That certainly is a great goal to have. We all want to be successful business owners who have year-over-year increases in sales and are consistently building something better.

Now I am 35. I have a little more time to reflect on things and just what we are doing with the company. It takes more time now than it ever has to plot the plan for growth and how we are going to achieve it. And the two things we need more now than we ever have are the money and the people. The more we want to grow, the more qualified people we need to hire. We really need to hire smart people to take this company where we want it to go.

One of the biggest revelations I had this year was the realization that a growing company wasn't actually our number one goal. Hiring people was. Growing the company was number two. Having the ability to provide good, solid jobs with room for growth is absolutely the most important thing to me. It just took me a while to figure that out. It is such an obvious part of running a business, that value gets looked over very easy, but I suspect you may feel the same way.

If you are a business owner and you hire just one person,

part time, to help set up some gear, you are creating a job. You are helping someone else out. And that is something to be proud of.

We have over 60 employees at Synergetic. And if we were to all of a sudden stop doing what we do, a lot of people would be in a tough position. Each year, we want to hire more. And each year we want to benefit the community by offering people those jobs.

Think about your company for a minute. Even if you don't have people working for you, I bet your company directly affects other businesses that you do business with. When you buy from them, they need more people to help them, so they have to hire people. When you do a good job, more people want to use you, which may require you to train a new DJ. Or hire an assistant. Or just buy more gear and other items. It all contributes to the economy.

Now I know some of you think hiring people and having people work for you is difficult, but when you look at it in the context of creating jobs so America can get back to work, then it seems like a much more exciting thing to do. Good people are out there and they need jobs. How awesome would it be if you could teach them and give them the opportunity!

For my company, up until now, that was always a by-product of doing a good job. But now, the good job is the by-product of the good people. And that always makes me smile; it will make you smile too.

Start small. Hire someone to help with the little things. Do some research on hiring. Read about best practices and how to interview. Take some time to get more educated yourself so that you can help create just one job. That's it. Just one. If all the readers of this magazine could create one new job; part time, full time, heck even on a contract basis, we could collectively create over 20,000 jobs. Wow, now that would be pretty cool, don't you think? **MB**

Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start-up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.



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